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THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE

ISSUE 126 JANUARY 2010

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**PLUS:**

**Sharpen Your Focus for 2010**

**Inside the Industry:  
B-52's Avi El-Kiss**

**Time Trippin':  
Using Music Logs**

**Playing Hits Across Decades**

**Turning Over Rocks to Find  
Alternative Markets**

**Scamming the Scammer**

**Web Video  
Well Done**

**Video Tips:  
Production &  
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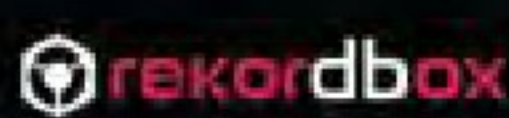
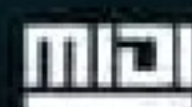
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# Watch Yourself

**W**hether you're the resolution-making sort or not, the start of a new year is a natural time to take a look at your life and re-evaluate your situation. For me, the first few weeks of the decade have provided much food for thought.

First off, this issue is focusing on the continually growing video trend. DJs are approaching video from a bunch of different angles these days. Playing music videos "straight," or scratching, mixing and/or mashing them up to provide a whole new level of excitement; creating video montages or slide shows with soundtracks for the grand entrance or other special reception moments; partnering with videographers or actually employing them as part the company's services to record the event (and generate another stream of income); making high-quality demo videos to include on the company's website; all these ways of doing video—and more—are on the rise in the mobile DJ world.

It's no wonder: People are more and more "into" video, whether it's capturing any special moment with their phones, utilizing today's easy-to-use digital cameras to document life's events, uploading fun videos to YouTube, or many other outlets. The younger demographic is certainly more savvy as a whole than us older folks when it comes to video, but it seems we all EXPECT video to be a part of almost everything these days. As we've mentioned previously, today's audiences want to be "in the frame" as part of the show. People want to watch themselves, so it's a good idea to see if you can cater to this desire. This issue aims to give you some ideas about how you can fit video into your services, or take what you're already doing to the next level.



Always sensitive to metaphors, I have a personal note to share here about "watching myself" in a different way. I don't usually see a need to get too detailed about my own life in these Track One pieces, but I had an experience that probably justifies it, at least this one time. While in the process of wrapping up production on this issue, I had a stroke. Yes, you heard right. Fortunately for me the blood clot that entered my brain only

affected the part that controls balance.

Although I was a relatively healthy person before the event, since this episode, I've had to make a lot of changes to how I "watch myself" (eating, exercise, etc.) to do all I can to avoid ever having another stroke. Also

My point in sharing this (other than to provide a little explanation about why this issue is getting to you so late!) is that I realized it took a major life event to make me truly re-evaluate things, not only health-wise, but all my priorities. It's almost as if someone was saying, "You weren't quite serious enough about making changes this year." Well, now I'm listening, and I hope you too can see some real positive change in your business, and your life in general, in 2010. Watch yourself! **MB**

**Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief**

*PS—Many thanks to my great publisher Ryan and the rest of the Mobile Beat team, along with many others, for your support during my time of "crisis." You rock!*

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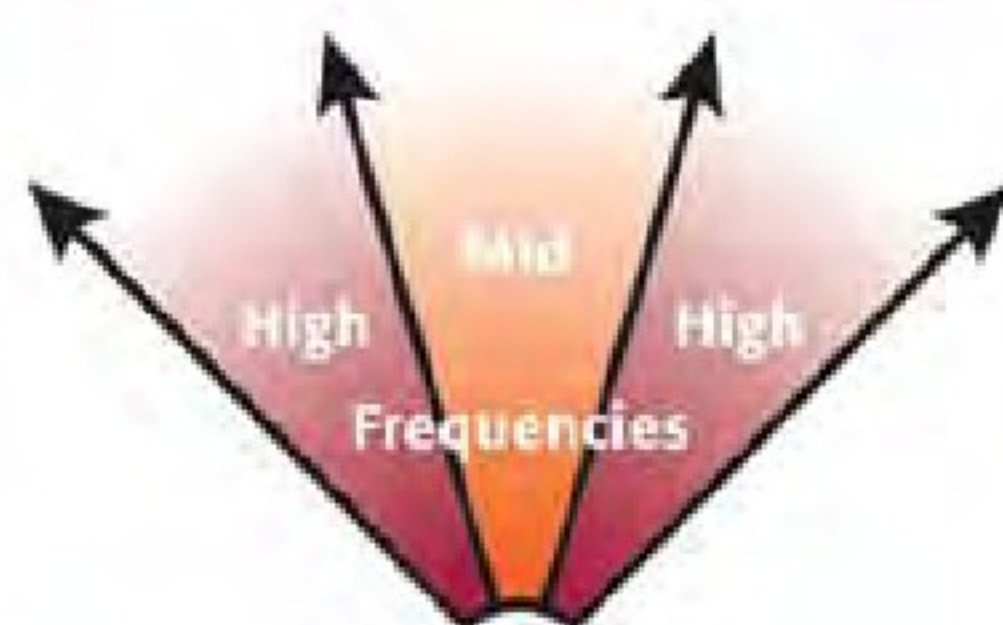
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## BC PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCES CONSOLIDATION OF BRAND NAMES

BC Productions, Inc. the parent company of ProDJ.Com and Mobile Beat Magazine, Trade Shows and Online, has announced as of January 1, 2010 all divisions will merge under the Mobile Beat brand name. Ryan Burger, President of BCP, said "Mobile Beat had a wider base and is the oldest of the two so it was an easy choice. We'd like to extend a thank you to the community of ProDJ.Com and all the moderators since its inception in 1995. Remember, just the 'town name' has changed, not the community that resides there."

Start.ProDJ.Com is now Start.MobileBeat.Com, DJU is now housed at DJU.MobileBeat.Com and the Mall.ProDJ.com is now at Mall.MobileBeat.Com.

David Saghian of Saghian Capital is setting up a new e-commerce site using the domain ProDJ.Com. The revised site debuts in January.

## WILL THE 2010 MB TOUR STOP IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Minneapolis? Kansas City? St. Louis? Dallas? Houston? These are some of the cities we've heard from that were disappointed that the 2009 Mobile Beat - Pioneer ProDJ Tour 2009 didn't pay a visit. Well, in 2010 it's up to YOU. Some of the past tour's most successful stops were those with strong local backing.

Get together as a group, an ADJA chapter, or other local association and make a request for us to bring next year's roadshow to your neighborhood. Please e-mail Mike Buonaccorso, Trade Show and Tour Producer, at [mb@mobile-beat.com](mailto:mb@mobile-beat.com) expressing your interest and we will send you the requirements to make it happen. 2009 cities are eligible for a repeat visit!

# MBLVX Update

## DJ KOOL FILLS SLOT AT AMERICAN DJ PARTY AT MBLVX

Through a great connection with DJ Sparky B, DJ Kool, known for his 1996 hit "Let Me Clear My Throat," will be performing at the American DJ Customer Appreciation Party at MBLVX. An instantly recognizable floor-filler, and the track remains popular to this day. More recently, DJ Kool has been featured on Mýa's 2006 single "Ayo!" from her 2008 album, [ ITAL ] Liberation. He was also featured on two tracks on Will Smith's 2005 album, [ ITAL ] Lost and Found.

Born in Washington, DC, influences from his years of working the go-go and rap circuits are apparent in his music. During the early- to mid-1980s, Kool worked as a warm-up DJ for Rare Essence, until he was picked up by CLR Records. Kool began recording in 1988, releasing his first album, [ ITAL ] The Music Ain't Loud Enough. He tried to inform the studio art of hip-hop with a live feel in keeping with his experience, notably incorporating call and response much like early hip-hop.

By the time of 1996's "Let Me Clear My Throat," mostly recorded live in Philadelphia, the East Coast underground was buzzing about Kool's way with a crowd. American Records won a five-way



bidding war and reissued the track early the following year, when it climbed into the top five on the rap charts.

(Info compiled from [www.allmusic.com](http://www.allmusic.com) and <http://en.wikipedia.org>.)

## MBLVX FINAL CHECKLIST

Counting down the remaining days to the 2010 Mobile Beat Las Vegas Show?

Here's a handy list to keep you track:

### BEFORE YOU GO

**1. Pre-register.** The longer you wait, the more you pay. Get your passes online at <https://members.mobile-beat.com> or call 800-257-7635.

**2. Book your room.** *The \$59 room rate is the best deal we've ever offered!* With a recent \$20-million renovation, guests will experience a "new look" Riviera with remodeled guest rooms, and 150,000 square feet of refurbished casino space. You can do it done at MobileBeat.com, by phone at 877-535-5335 or at [Room\\_Reservations@theriviera.com](mailto:Room_Reservations@theriviera.com)

**4. Book your flight.** Jet Blue Airlines is the official carrier for Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2010. To be able to use the discount, all travel must be booked online. Any flight can be chosen as long as it arrives at the destination no more than two days before the start of the convention and departs no more than two days after the end of the convention. Receive a 5% discount of the lowest available fare by using the code MBLVX.

**5. Rent a car.** Budget is the official car rental agency for Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2010. Attendees can book their vehicles through the reservation hotline, 702-730-0100, or through [www.budgetvegas.com](http://www.budgetvegas.com). Using the code LCR7777783 will guarantee the show rates!



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**6. Plan your attack.** Set priorities. Go on the website and review the schedule before getting there and make a plan. Pre-select the seminars that make sense for you. Also, plan time to network with your peers. And of course, set aside time—and cash—for the exhibit floor!

**7. Also plan your fun!** First time in Vegas? Leisure time is scarce during the packed show schedule, so plan out what sights you want to see in advance to save time.

**8. Pack comfortable shoes,** and the clothing that portrays the image you want.

**9. Check your supply of business cards,** and then take twice that amount.

10. Bring a camera to capture your MBLVX experience.

#### AT THE SHOW

**1. Stay on your game plan.** Get to your seminars early and be prepared to take notes. Have fun (it is Vegas after



all) but don't let it keep you from accomplishing your goals. Make the most of your investment in the show.

**2. Visit the Show Bookstore.** Many of the conference's professional speak-

ers offer valuable optional materials for a fee to supplement their presentations. It's another opportunity to stock up on information over and above what you already gathered.

**3. Storm the Exhibit Hall.** When the exhibits open, see who and what is there. Leave at the end of the show with a full understanding of what every exhibitor was there for. Hang on to the Program Guide for future reference.

**4. Fill up your tank.** Gather as much information as you can. Talk with other attendees; exchange business cards; attend the evening events—take advantage of all opportunities to build your personal / professional network.

**5. Don't miss the big finish.** Be in the Exhibit Hall at 5PM on Thursday for the Annual Gear Giveaway—YOU MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN!

#### BRING IT HOME

When on that plane ride home or immediately after you return from the show:

Review all the information you have gathered. Write a summary of what you've accomplished, or what information and/or ideas you plan to act on ASAP.

## Odyssey Journeys to MBLVX, Helps DJs Travel and Play

Mobile Beat's show management is pleased to welcome back to Las Vegas again this year **Odyssey Innovative Designs**, one of the industry's leaders in the design and manufacture of professional mobile accessory solutions for DJs and the pro audio market. Founded in 1995, Odyssey has brought to market hundreds of unique solutions for transporting, setting up and supporting,



and more easily performing with your audio, video and lighting gear. The Odyssey group of companies now also includes Show Solutions and BC Cases.

Odyssey's current offerings span a wide spectrum, including: standard flight cases, regular and carpeted; the Flight Ready line, featuring amp racks, CD player, mixer and turntable cases; combo cases; CD cases and bags, including the stylish KROM line; carpeted and flight-style cases for turntables and Ips, mixers, video gear and more; DJ combo cases/racks; console cases; laptop gear, including cases, racks, bags and laptop stands; DJ tables; multi-carts; light and speaker stands; and much more. Custom-built options are also available.

Make sure to check out Odyssey Innovative Designs at MBLVX, where they will showcase their latest products, highlighting the new Redline Series of gig bags for DJs. You'll find them online at [www.odysseygear.com](http://www.odysseygear.com).





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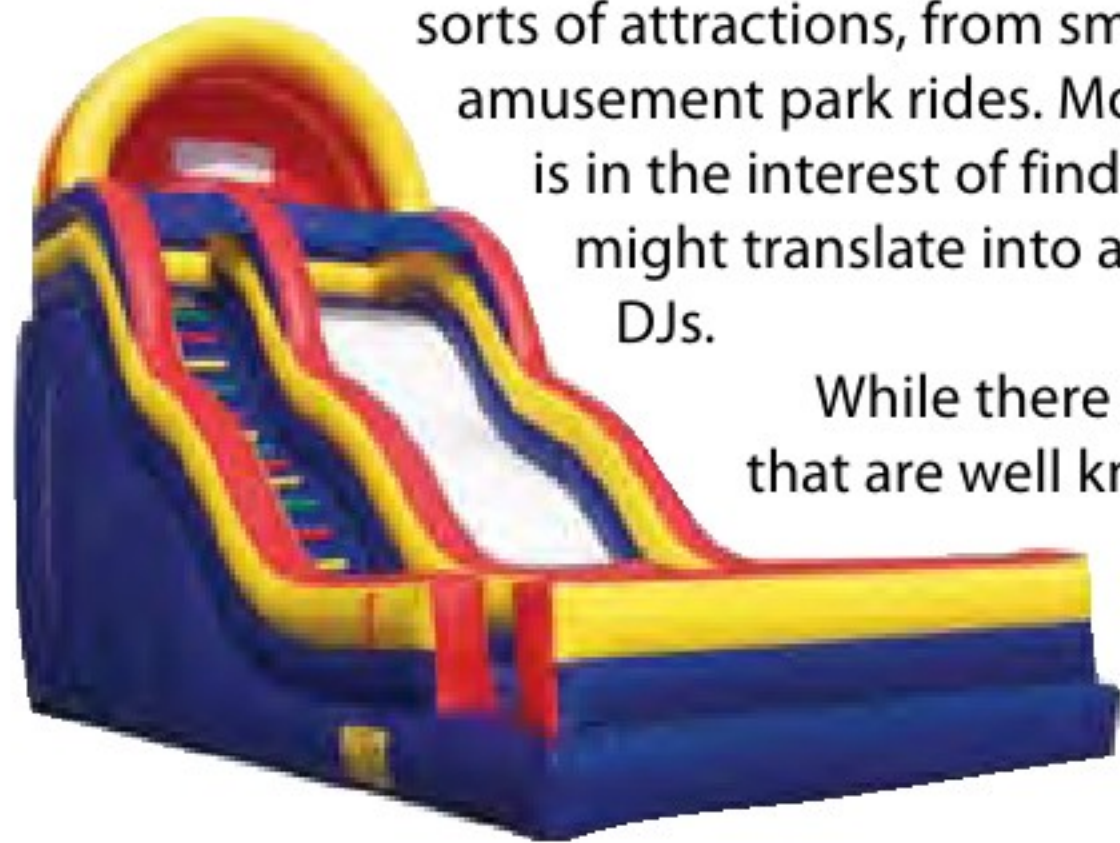
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## IAAPA: Fun & Games

In the constant search for new products and services that the readers of Mobile Beat Magazine would be interested in using to expand their business's services I recently attended the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) Expo last November. This is the show features all sorts of attractions, from small portable game units to amusement park rides. Mobile Beat's connection to it is in the interest of finding any new attraction that might translate into added income for mobile DJs.



While there I ran into several vendors that are well known to the DJ industry such as Creative Imagineering (game show systems), Fantasy Entertainment (photo booths), European Body

Art (portable airbrush tattoo stations), SnowMasters (snow machines) and DigiGames (game show systems).

Also on hand were a number of disc jockey service company owners looking for ideas for expanding their entertainment offerings.

Paul Dominquez of JTD Productions of San Jose, California told me that he "comes to IAAPA to advance his business and not just be a DJ." Bobby Morganstein from BMP of Philadelphia was

there to "find more novelty games and activities for parties." His company is heavily involved in the bar/bat mitzvah arena, where they are always looking for new activities.

Most of the companies showing their games, rides, haunted attractions, and other fun stuff are marketing themselves to the likes of Chuck-E-Cheese and Disney. It's certainly a fun event to be at, although it's not particularly DJ-oriented. But at this show, I saw items of interest to DJs, including a large selection of inflatable ride companies, party props and novelties, laser tag systems, plus a couple of gems that I can see hitting the DJ industry with something unique.



I spoke with Jeremy Hill of Open Air Cinemas ([www.openaircinema.us](http://www.openaircinema.us)), which manufactures and sells inflatable screens that go way beyond what you find in those SkyMall catalogs. These screens are anywhere from 9 to 40 feet wide and inflate quickly. A nice possibility if you need to get into the outdoor sizes where traditional fast fold screens are just not large enough. Another company that you may see at the MBLVX conference in February is Putts Perfect ([www.puttsperfect.com](http://www.puttsperfect.com)). They are producing an inflatable mini-golf course that would be handy for the afterproms, grad nights and other events that you are using to fill in your non-Saturday schedule. **MB**

## E-BEAT

# Mac Users Learn How to *djay*

WELCOME TO THE ITUNES DJ GENERATION

BY MARC ANDREWS •

Being a recently converted "Mac head," as soon as I heard about a "new" Mac program for DJs (at least new to me) I just had to check it out. While Megaseg's Mac DJ product has been the workhorse of choice for a long time, until now Mac based digital DJs have not had another

Many of us have gotten into the habit of fulfilling our on-the-fly track needs directly from the iTunes store, be it downloading to an iPhone at events when there is a last-minute request, or if we do it in advance, export it and then import into our digital DJ racks. So if you are using iTunes already for getting much of your new catalog music, in addition to using services like Promo Only and RPM Top Hits for your current tracks, djay makes it possible to seamlessly flow into actually playing tracks onsite without a lot of jumping between software.

As other DJ publications have noted, djay is not "just another clone of Traktor or Serato. This program is has more in common with some of the baseline applications

many other automatic features such as gain control, tempo control and beat detection. Plenty enough for any of the DJs that I work with, except the more specialized karaoke MP3+G and video DJ events. (I wouldn't be at all surprised to see video features added to future versions of djay, considering how big video content has become at the iTunes store.)

While djay has actually been around for a while, the new version that I am experiencing now as my iTunes companion has some nice additions to previous versions, including multi-touch access on notebooks, and enhanced integration with the iTunes playlist system for the automix feature.

Along with games like DJ Hero from Activision (with a review coming soon in Mobile Beat) programs like djay are really going to help the next generation to get into DJing. To get djay, go to Apple stores or get it online from [www.djay-software.com](http://www.djay-software.com). A 15-day free trial is available so you can try it out and see if it's for you before paying the \$49.95 for the software. **MB**

[www.djay-software.com](http://www.djay-software.com)



real option in true mobile DJ software. The application, djay 3, is being marketed as a consumer product, thus its \$50 price point, but it can perform on the level needed for an average wedding or school dance and has several unique features. But the key to djay, is its tie-in with iTunes.

available for mobile DJs. The key difference is that it was developed completely as a Mac program and as such is completely integrated into the OS X operating system. While it isn't heavy on power-user features like other pro DJ applications, it does have automixing, MIDI controller mapping, and



# BE HEARD!



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# Time Trippin'

HOW A LOOK BACK CAN REVEAL THE ROAD AHEAD

BY STU CHISHOLM •

**T**he realization that I've had a very long career is sometimes driven home in surprising ways. A long relationship with clients and their families is one of them. Just before I began my DJ career, there was a little girl in my apartment complex who played with my girlfriend's son. She was one of many kids in the complex I got to know. Flash-forward about a decade, she's calling me to entertain at her wedding! So there we are, and she's a foot taller than when I'd last seen her, looking adult and beautiful in her wedding gown, a child no longer. Flash-forward again by nine more years and she's calling me about her 30th birthday celebration! (Her "little sister" would call me soon after for her 25th.) The reason I'm recounting this particular family relationship is because the "little girl" called me again a few days ago...to spin the music at her *daughter's* Sweet 16 Party. Like a family doctor, I'm not needed often, but they wouldn't trust anyone else with their special life events.

## THE VENERABLE LOG...

Over the same week I met with my friend and her daughter, I'd begun the tedious project of digitizing my old program logs. Today they're Excel files, but for years they'd simply been hand-

written lists, and over time those lists filled a couple of file cabinets! Since my living space isn't getting any bigger, it was time for the paper to go. But I knew that this project was going to be long-term; something I'd do when the important stuff was done. Or I'd tackle them at lunch and between projects: less fun, but more productive than playing Mafia Wars.

I'd gotten in the habit of keeping a program long back in the 80s, when it was a job requirement at the nightclub where I worked. I immediately realized their utility. By noting what is played, in order, noting the response and jotting down any special notes, I've built a record of my events and, over time, a history. If there was a dispute ("You didn't play..." or "You never did..."), I could point to the log and tell them that yes, I did indeed play that song, and what time I played it, and what kind of response it got on the dancefloor. That response could alert me to a song that would soon catch fire, or maybe a tried-and-true floor-packer that was starting to outlast its welcome, helping me to fine-tune my programs. In a nightclub setting, this can be critical. For weddings and mobile events, a longer-term benefit has also become apparent.

## ...FINDS A NEW USE

When playing multiple events for the same family or group, I would bring the program logs from their previous parties. It's a graphic way to see what worked best and what was less successful. Things like birthdays and anniversaries were noted, and my program matched their tastes more precisely with each event. Over time, it's as if I became a part of the family. It's about as close to being psychic as you can get!

Today, a lot of DJs depend on the automatic logging systems built into their DJ software. Yet that software doesn't note if a song was a request from a guest or from the list provided by a wedding couple. It doesn't note the time it was played, or any dedications that might've accompanied the request. In short, they lack detail. A separate log, recorded on the spot, is by far a better way to go.

## TIMES AND TASTES: REMEMBERING '88

Keeping detailed logs over time can not only help with future programming—and make a career DJ feel long in the tooth—but it vividly shows the patterns of popular music, and how we sometimes use it in surprising ways. A good case in point was the year 1988.

22 years ago, many of the "usual suspects" were there; "Celebration," "Old Time Rock & Roll," "Y.M.C.A." and "Lady In Red"—already established classics that we still play today and will be spinning for many more years to come. Trends appear and those songs and artists that couples couldn't live without, that seemed so important at the time also appear. One artist that I noticed on





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**The log could alert me to a song that would soon catch fire, or maybe a tried-and-true floor-packer that was starting to outlast its welcome.**

almost every list that year was The Jets, a Latin-American group who had a ballad called "Make It Real," and a dance track called "Rocket 2 U." The former was even an oft-used first dance at weddings! But it's doubtful that anyone would want to hear those tracks today outside of a class reunion or anniversary.

On a more personal level, I could see how I began to assemble some of the sets that have become my show staples, and how they've evolved as well. We all have our sequences and sets we like and, try as we might to be versatile and fresh, we always show off that perfect mix when given the opportunity. Gazing through the telescope of time, I noted the first time I mixed "Brick House" with "Play That Funky Music" back in 1984. "Louie Louie" by the Kingsmen, previously a huge favorite among the sock hop set, was replaced by "Some Kind of Wonderful" by Grand Funk, or "Twist & Shout" by the Beatles as a follow-up to Bob Seger's iconic hit. By the way, I also noticed that in 1985, live mixing during a reception cocktail hour and dinner period was a standout when other DJs were just playing a background tape. By 1988, the movie *Dirty Dancing* had breathed new life into songs like "Do You Love Me" by the Contours, "Cry To Me" by Solomon Burke, and gave us the destined-to-be-classic "(I've Had) The Time Of My Life,"

Stu Chisholm, a mobile DJ in the Detroit area since 1979, has also been a nightclub DJ, done some radio, some commercial voice-over work and has even worked a roller skating rink! Stu attended the famous Specs Howard School of Broadcasting and has been a music collector since the age of seven. Stu's guide to the profession, *The Complete DJ*, was recently released by ProDJ Publishing.



which every bride, it seemed, wanted to be the final song of their event.

## A STUDY IN CONTRASTS

Indispensable groups from 1988 that are never (or seldom) heard at receptions today include: Exposé, Debbie Gibson, Taylor Dayne, The Whispers, Pebbles, Johnny Kemp, Pretty Poison, Tiffany, Lisa Lisa & The Cult Jam, Klymaxx and Paul Young. "Dance Little Birdie" became "The Chicken Dance," the Emeralds version replacing The Tweets '81 hit. Still going strong: Madonna, Prince, Michael Jackson, Bob Seger, The Village People, Bon Jovi and Billy Idol. Activities have changed, too. At least in my locality, the tradition of the bride dancing with her father first, who then ceremoniously "passes" his daughter to the groom has all but disappeared. So did the dollar dance, for a while, but it has been slowly making a comeback in recent years. The biggest casualty, however, has been the Grand March, which used to follow the bride and groom's first dance and the introduction of the Bridal Party. The couple would lead their party around the room, a bit like a party train or conga line, but when they returned to the dance floor, they would turn and face one another holding hands and everyone behind them danced under their "arch" did the same. Soon everyone was dancing through a "tunnel" of friends and family members, kissing everyone along the way! On the extremely rare occasion when a couple opts for a Grand March today, there's absolutely no kissing, except, hopefully, for the wedding couple!

## LOG ROLLING

So what does all this mean? Most immediately it means that program logs give you a way to gauge many things about your performance, clients, music and trends in both the short and long term. This information can be useful, sometimes in unexpected ways! When perusing Facebook and some DJ websites, I've often wondered why DJs who don't offer photography still snap lots of pictures and post them online. Then I realized that, aside from a bit of promotion, it's a way to touch base with reality and affirm that we actually did something! It's a tangible piece of an experience that's gone like a puff of smoke. I remembered having the same feeling about my first program logs. Armed with that information, I could virtually re-create the entire event. It was somehow more [ital]real. I could also answer the party guest who called days or even weeks after an event asking, "What was that great song they used for their first dance?" Or, a request to "play all of those great tunes you played at my sister's wedding" was suddenly possible. And knowing when to STOP playing "Rocket 2 U" kept my program from becoming stale and might've even prevented a loss of business! Years from now, your own logs might also make you look back, as I have, and say, "What a long, strange trip it's been!" (Now where have we heard THAT before?)

Until next time, safe spinnin'! **MB**

## ARE YOU A "ONE-HIT WONDER" ?

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Stu Chisholm, a 30-year veteran mobile DJ, has worked at nightclubs, raves and rinks, and for a wide variety of events and clients. He has also worked in radio and has done voice-over work. He shares his years of experience and research into ways to "supplement your DJ income...with DJ INCOME" in this concise, practical, info-packed guide.

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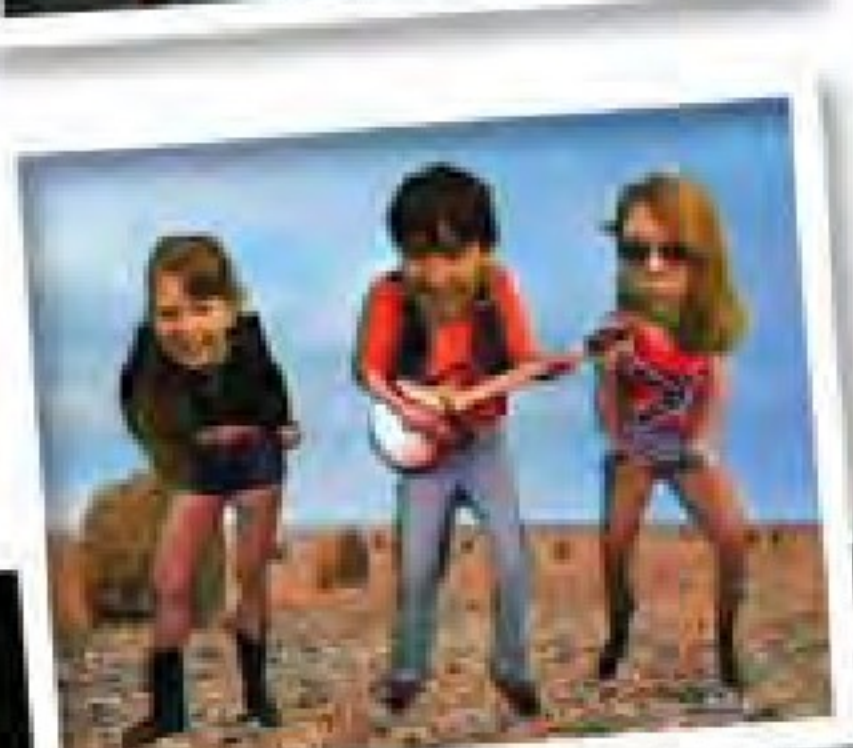
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# Why Play Games?

SOME GOOD REASONS TO GEAR UP FOR INTERACTIVE FUN

BY ROB JOHNSON •

**W**hy would you offer interactive games at your events? One thing I hear over and over from "other DJs" is that games are "cheesy." Let's look at that. Whatever your definition of cheesy is, I would think that what might be cheesy to one person would be a lot of fun for someone else. It comes down to knowing your market and knowing your audience.

When I am working with a potential or current client, I try to get as much information from them as possible about their event. What are they looking for? I am often working with a committee or small group that is planning the event. Are they looking for only things that interest them, or do they have the good of the entire group in mind? It helps that in my market I am known for a highly interactive show. When clients come to me they are already

looking for a certain level of entertainment. It is my job to work with them to develop a night of entertainment that will achieve their goal. Usually the goal is simply to HAVE FUN!

Many of the things I do, whether using a DigiGames game show system or some other interactive props, are designed to get people involved and having fun. There is no question that some would label many of the things as cheesy. I don't concern myself with labels. My only goal is to give my clients the best night of entertainment THEY are looking for.

## GIVE THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT

So back to the original question. Why play games? My answer is simple. They are profitable. They are unique. They set me apart from being "just a DJ." Don't get me wrong: I am not ashamed to be a DJ. I just like the fact that in a world where new DJ companies seem to sprout up like weeds, I can stay ahead of them by offering more than just music. As an ENTERTAINER I can charge more money if I can show the client my VALUE.

If you look around your market and realize everyone else is doing the same thing as you, maybe it is time to add some new ideas to your arsenal. There are several books and DVDs available that can give you ideas as to what you can do to enhance your show. A magazine like Mobile Beat provides great ideas. There are tradeshow both regionally and nationally. (BTW, DigiGames will be at both Mobile Beat and NAMM. Stop by Capri Room 103 at MBLV 2010 to check out the latest systems.) Go on chat boards like ProDJ.Com and network with others. There are companies like Creative Imagineering and DigiGames that can help you get started in the trivia party business. Costs have decreased dramatically. For example, DigiGames now has a simple wireless buzzer system for under \$500. You can make that back in one show by adding it to your options.

People love playing games. Not everyone does, but usually enough to make an event fun. I guarantee you that more

people in your audience will participate in some form of game, either in a group or individually, than will get up and sing karaoke. While corporate events are a big avenue for interactive games they are not the only potential client. Bars offer nightly entertainment. Why not try to book a weekly interactive game night? Schools, retirement homes, churches and resorts all have regular events that you could provide entertainment for. I am really seeing an increase in wedding clients who want more interactive games. Some people want to make their night unique, and by offering customized games you can really leave an impression. But, of course not everyone wants this kind of thing at their wedding. That's fine. Give your client what THEY want. The ones that do want it will love it, and the people in the audience WILL remember you.

Another wedding angle for games: If they are not interested in having games at their actual reception, they may be very interested in making them part of the rehearsal dinner the night before. This allows you to upsell to a client that already trusts you and has you booked. It also provides you the opportunity to get to know the families better, prior to the actual wedding reception, which should enable you to provide better service that night as well.

I recently did a reception that had two hours of interaction and games. At the end of the night I had a gentleman come up to me and tell me he had never been to a wedding reception like this and that I was not like other DJs he had seen. He went on to tell me that he had four daughters and I would be doing ALL of their weddings. I guess that is one big reason why I do interactive games. **MB**

## Rehearsal Games

If a wedding couple is not interested in having games at their actual reception, they may still want to make them part of the rehearsal dinner the night before. This allows you to upsell to a client that already trusts you and has you booked. It also provides you the opportunity to get to know the families better, prior to the actual wedding reception, which should enable you to provide better service that night as well.



Rob Johnson is the spokesperson and National Representative for DigiGames. Prior to switching to DigiGames two years ago, he used Creative Imagineering products for over six years.



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# DJ Toad: Video Mixmaster

CINCINNATI-BASED PARTY MASTERMIND DJ TOAD REVEALS HOW VIDEO HELPS HIM RISE ABOVE OTHERS IN THE ENTERTAINMENT POND

BY DJ DAYNA •

**D**J Toad has been rockin' the greater Cincinnati area and points beyond, all across the US, since 1992. As a young tadpole at Miami University of Ohio in Oxford, Toad became eager to learn how to be a mixmaster on the turntables. He landed a slot at the campus radio station, where he DJ'd his own techno show. With a lot of practice and his rise in popularity as a radio DJ, Toad broke into the club and bar scene, spinning the hottest dance tracks for mass crowds. During his last year of college, he bought his first set of mobile gear and expanded into DJing fraternity and sorority parties, as well as other campus events.

Succeeding college graduation, DJ Toad decided to turn his music mixing passion into a career. By 2001, Toad Productions employed a team of professional DJs and covered various special events, including corporate functions, weddings, middle and high school dances, and bar/bat mitzvahs. In addition to running a successful mobile business, DJ Toad has toured around the country for *Rolling Stone*, Nike, and Ford as a DJ and producer. In recent years, via networking with other DJs outside of Ohio and referrals from other gigs, doors have opened elsewhere. He has traveled to places like Arizona, South Carolina, New Hampshire, and Philadelphia to entertain.

Along with mixing beats, DJ Toad has mastered the art of video mixing and now incorporates it into his mobile DJ gigs. I sat down with Toad (not on a lily pad) and talked about how he utilizes video in the world of mobile DJing.

**DJ DAYna:** When did you first start using videos as part of your DJ gig?

**DJ Toad:** I actually started in 1997 fiddling with videos in bars and clubs. I used a \$600 single-disc DVD player, where I'd drop an occasional video during a set. It was a total pain in the ass to do because you weren't able to mix and it was slow. In the old days, guys had to bring out three VHS tape machines and separate video monitors. But, now

everything is streamlined and sleek.

**DD:** So how has the constant change in technology affected your approach to performance?

**DT:** I've never been reluctant to move forward and progress, as far as technology goes. I started on Technics 1200s, then I went with the Pioneer CDJs, and then the Pioneer DVJs, and now I'm using Serato Video Scratch Live with the Technics 1200s. Our (Toad Productions') edge has always been that we actually mix and not just throw on some iTunes playlist that we put on autoplay. So, when the Pioneer DVJs came out, it really made it viable to do a mixing show with the videos as opposed to what I thought was a novelty...I get on technology, but I always wait until it's right. The Pioneer DVJ was right, as the Video Scratch Live is now right. The Rane TTM57 has the audio and video mixer in it and the preview screens are on your laptop and everything else. For me, simplicity has always been a key too. And when the next right thing comes along I'll go with that as well.

**DD:** Do you find it more or less challenging to mix with videos compared to just music?

**DT:** It seems now videos have finally found a standard. It took awhile for MP3 to finally become a standard for audio. Now we have MP4 for video, which is key in a lot of things. One of the biggest pains in the butt with video mixing has been all the effort that people have to go through in converting videos, tagging them, and keeping track of your libraries. But, now with MPEG-4, it's made things a lot simpler. Also, the biggest godsend of the last year was the content providers like Promo Only and Jones TM. Promo Only now offers MPEG-4, which has been a major relief...With the technology of Serato, it's no harder for me to mix video then it is audio at this stage. My music library is set up so I'm playing video files all the time, whether I'm actually using videos or not. I don't have to keep separate music libraries anymore. It's all just media files.

**DD:** What type of mobile events do you use your video mixing gear at?

**DT:** As far as the mobile edge, we do







the video mixing with either the stretch screens or plasma screens at a lot of high school events, as well as bar/bat mitzvahs and Sweet 16's. The corporate events are becoming popular as well. It's also working for weddings. Really any event can be enhanced by it. The key to make it work though, is to have custom content. In the school market for example, you have to take the videos that come out and edit them for video and audio content because they are too risqué. Along with that, sometimes videos don't get released soon enough, so you gotta often times be creative and fill the screen for a super hot song whose video isn't out yet. I use a lot of clips from dance movies, break dancing clips, etc. It's a constant chore to come up with new and interesting stuff to put up there.

**DD:** What editing program do you use to do that?

**DT:** I use Sony Vegas to do all my editing. For corporate and mitzvahs, they'll give me a folder full of pictures that I use as a slideshow for ambience. You can also incorporate company logos or anything like that. It's another way for corporations to market for themselves.

**DD:** Tell me more about weddings. How do you utilize the video for them?

**DT:** The cool thing we can do for weddings now is we can create a special slideshow for the first dance or mother/son and father/daughter dances. Instead of having a boring montage that everyone has to sit through, it's a way of combining elements to make it a different type of montage. For instance, you can have one slideshow of the bride growing up during the father/daughter dance; or same with the groom, you can have pictures of him growing up for the mother/son dance. Then you can have pictures of the couple together for their first dance. A lot of brides say they want to get to the dancing part quick. Well, if you start combining stuff like that, instead of having a separate slideshow and separate dancing, it'll move things along quicker. It also



gives more for guests to look at rather than just the dancing. Another thing too is, for every bride who wants to be in the spotlight, there's other ones that don't, so it gives something else for guests to look at, instead of just the bride.

**DD:** Offering videos as an option to your clients for their event is a unique aspect in itself. What do you think is the main advantage to your mobile business?

**DT:** Well, an advantage of having videos as part of your mobile business is making more money! You can sell the production element—the video projectors, screens, videos, and everything else that comes with it.

**DD:** Besides what you've already mentioned before, is there anything else you can use the video screens for at events?

**DT:** The other big thing I'm doing now is the Text Live screen. The crowds can text to each other or request songs and it appears

on the video screen. Corporate clients will then have the ability to market after the event, using the numbers we collect.

Games like Rock Band, DJ Hero, and Interactive Trivia are all the future of where

the video concept is going. I find that crowds these days don't just like to be entertained, but like to be involved with the entertainment. So instead of just watching cool videos, they can actually interact with each other and be a "part of the show," so to speak.

**DD:** Looking into the future, what do you foresee happening with integrating video into the mobile DJ industry?

**DT:** One of the newer things we're doing is we can do real-time slide shows using a wireless camera card. I can send someone out with a camera and as they are taking pictures at the event, it will wirelessly feed the pictures to my computer, which will send the images to the screens instantly. It's very cool. I think then the next step is, you'll be able to do that with video as well. The real time stuff is really cool. And going back to the Text Live screen, the other thing will be the ability for guests to throw up their own pictures as the party is going on as well. So they can get in on that action. Like with the advent of Facebook and Twitter, there are thousands of pictures up within minutes of an event happening, so that's how people's mentality is now, they want to see everything instantly. I definitely see a lot more interaction with the crowd, be it playing games, trivia, or providing pictures. They're going to make a lot of what's happening on the screen!

You can check out DJ Toad at [www.djtoad.com](http://www.djtoad.com). **MB**



# Changing Focus

A DJ-TURNED-VIDEOGRAPHER COMPARES AND CONTRASTS THE TWO PROFESSIONS

**I started in the DJ industry over twenty-one years ago when I was in high school. When my brother was a DJ in high school, I thought it was one of the coolest things ever, and I couldn't wait to do that when I got to school.**

When I was a DJ in college, I was approached by Ryan Burger to assist with a few college parties. Minus the pain of cramming 2 DJs, a full sound system, full lighting system and cases of tapes and CDs into a two-door VW Rabbit, I thought that this was pretty sweet gig.

## TRANSFORMATION FROM DJ TO VIDEOGRAPHER

Jumping ahead fourteen years, after developing into one of the company's main karaoke, game show, bar/bat mitzvah and wedding DJs, I decided to step away from the business. It wasn't an easy decision. Among a whole bunch of determining factors, the main reason was my back. Any DJ can confirm that the weight of the equipment can be stressful before and after the event. The other primary factor is that it really wasn't what I wanted to do full time. Don't get me wrong, I loved what I did, but it was physically and emotionally straining.

Before I left the DJ business, I was asked by a friend to DJ his wedding. He also asked me to video tape it as well. This was a neat trick. I found that I enjoyed doing the video work even more than DJing. But why?



Even though I had to be behind the camera, basically a fly on the wall and totally quiet, there is something that I had found that I was looking for the whole time: and outlet for my creativity. So for seven years, I became a wedding and corporate videographer for BC Productions. This

is what I enjoyed. As of last year, I left the company as they phased out their video business, and started my own videography/multimedia company called Virtual Waters Productions.

## TECH QUEST

Just like the DJs of today, it is important for the videographers to keep up with current technology. For DJ, it's gone from vinyl and cassette tapes to CDs and MP3 systems. Videography standards have changed as well. It started with the VHS tapes. Then it went to 8mm and now DV and HDD.

As of right now, the equipment that I use includes Canon GL-2s, which are 3CCD\* cameras and Sony wireless microphones. One other minor investment that I have added was a Lite Panel ([www.litepanels.com](http://www.litepanels.com)) for the camera. I have learned from experience that when the lights go down for the dancing, a camera light is definitely something that you should have.

I have been asked a few times by wedding couples if I shoot in HD (high definition) or standard definition. Technology is changing so fast that it is almost impossible to keep up with it financially, so I am sticking with standard def for the moment. It is certainly not a bad thing to have a standard def video; even HD is not a guarantee of perfection—it's only as good as the final production. The last wedding I shot was so clear and crisp, I was asked several times if it was an HD video.

As for the video editing software, it is a matter of personal preference. But I am using something now that I feel I should have used a long time ago. I converted to the Mac platform three years ago and never looked back. Although Avid is a top notch software system for the PC world, I highly recommend Final Cut Pro on the Mac. The majority of the editors that I work with will also agree that FCP is more user-friendly and crash-resistant.

## ONLY A MATTER OF TIME

The most difficult part about being a videographer is the challenge of the final product. As a DJ, you meet with the client, set up, organize your music, perform and leave. Every step is an important task. While the marketing and sales picture is

BY BRAD FEINGOLD •

basically the same for videographers and DJs, for videographers there is a lot more to do. We are with the client for up to ten hours on the day of their event. We are the friendly paparazzi, trying to make sure that we have every important shot. And after the last song is played, our work REALLY begins.

The editing can be the most challenging and time-consuming part of the entire contract. The goal is to create a final DVD that will capture the essence of the entire day in a two-hour package. The shortest amount of time that it has taken me to fully edit a DVD was about six hours. But the longest time has been between fifty to sixty hours. Keep in mind that, it is all about what you put into video, just like it's about what you put into the event as a DJ. Creatively putting together video footage is similar to creating a great music mix that keeps the dance floor packed. While the ceremony itself is already taken care of, the highlights and special features can take up a large chunk of editing time. But the response to the end result from the bride and groom—in this case to the DVD, rather than the party itself—is really what is most important.

## PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP

The market and clientele for videographers and DJs is exactly the same. We can actually work together to sell each other's services in a partnership. This is why many companies decide to offer both services. When I worked for BC Productions, a lot of times we even offered a package deal. You would get the DJ service and the wedding videography package all at an affordable combo price. But there is absolutely nothing wrong with working together with other services. A couple years ago, a Mobile Beat convention pointed out that the pot is big enough for everyone in the industry. If we work together, we can expand the industry beyond anyone's expectations. **MB**

\*CCD = Charge-Coupling Device: In cameras, the device that converts the light captured by a photoelectric sensor into a digital signal.





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# Photo Slide Shows Made Easy

BY MARK EVANS •

**W**e have all been to events where people show videos and photos of the couple or the birthday person and we think, "I could have done better." Well with the right tools and a little knowledge you can. I've put together shows from very simple photo fades to very elaborate video and photo montages and clients love them. So where do you start? Let's begin with the basics.

## SCANNING, SAVING

Scanners are widely available and you need a pretty good one to make some nice crisp photos of older photos. When you scan a photo in you want to make sure you have the settings right. Most software programs will give you options to change DPI (dots per inch) or resolution. When scanning in small photos such as 3"x5" or 4"x6", you want to scan the photos in at 300 to 600 DPI. The reason for this is that you will want to have a digital version of the photo that is larger than what the output will be. This will give you some room to pan and zoom images. Knowing what the output will be is also very important. The slide show will look different if you are showing it on an HD TV than it will on a projector and screen. Keep this in mind when you start your project.

There are many formats available to save the photos in, but the industry standard and best format for this is JPEG (Joint Photographic Experts Group). This format loses very little quality even though it keeps the file size smaller. JPEGs work well when you put the photos into video.

## ORGANIZING

One of the key things I learned when I first started doing slide shows was the importance of a regular scheme for naming the photos. First, knowing how many photos you will have to put together is critical to how you name them. Let's say you have 150 photos to work with and you start naming them photo1, photo2, etc. If you are doing these chronologically then the numbers will be off. The program you use will put photo10, photo11 before photo2. It is best to start naming them photo001,

photo002 and so forth. If you have less than 100 photos then you can start with photo01, photo02.

## PROCESSING, ADJUSTING

Once you have your photos scanned or brought in from another digital source, it's time to clean them up. The industry standard and best program for this is Adobe Photoshop. Most people are not willing to shell out the \$700 for the full-blown program but there are some great alternatives. Photoshop Elements is the best-selling package at under \$90; it does a lot of what its big brother does and is perfect for what we need to do. Other great software programs for editing include Corel's Paint Shop Pro, Ulead Photo Impact or ACDSee Photo Editor. For Mac users there is iPhoto (pre-installed on all new Macs) and Aperture from Apple. I recommend you download the trial versions and see which one works best for you. The main things you will want to look for are color adjustments, photo restoration, red eye removal and photo sizing. Preparing the photos is typically the most time consuming part of the project, so you want to find a program that will do the job as quickly and efficiently as possible, while fitting with your way of working.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Here is where you'll have the most fun, in putting the photos together. Again, there are many tools to choose from and some will have steeper learning curves than others—and may not give you the flexibility to get the job done. In most cases you will not need a full video editor, but these do give you the most creative options. These programs include Adobe Premiere and Avid for Windows or Mac platforms. For Mac only Final Cut Pro or Final Cut Express are the standards. Because of the cost and learning curve to these programs you may want to consider one of the following programs at a fraction of the cost. For PC users, Cyberlink PowerDirector, Corel Video Studio, Adobe Premiere Elements, Sony Vegas Movie Studio, and Pinnacle Studio are the top programs and all under \$100.



For Mac users, try iMovie, another pre-installed option. Each of these programs gives you a full timeline option to work with, and some give you an easy-to-use storyboard option that allows for drag and drop placement of photos and videos.

These programs may still be a little too much for what you want to do, so let's take a look at some of the most popular programs for creating slide shows. My number one pick for the PC is Photodex's ProShow Gold. For under \$70 it gives you incredible flexibility and power over the photos. With just a few keystrokes you can drag all the photos into the timeline, adjust the time of the photos, change the transitions and put the photos into motion. One of my favorite things to do is slowly pan and zoom photos to create more dramatic energy.

If done right, you can highlight and zoom in on a person or draw attention to something extra in the photo. The program also comes with a simple yet effective photo editor for things like red-eye removal. One of the neat features of this program is that when you add music to the show you can automatically time the music to the photos. Let's say you have 50 photos and a 3-minute song for the soundtrack. Click a button and the timing changes from say 5 seconds per photo to 3.7 seconds so that they all fit the time-frame of the music. You can also manually adjust photos to make some stay on the screen longer and others shorter.

On the Mac, FotoMagico works very similarly to ProShow. This is also a drag and drop type of program and is very easy to use. It literally takes a few minutes to put all the photos in and make a few adjustments to put together a very nice show. Both programs give you options for outputting the final project onto disc or onto file. You can even upload directly to YouTube or Facebook to have your client see the show and make corrections before the event. This is quite a time-saver and clients love that they can see the final project as soon as you are done. Remember, most of these programs have free trial versions, so go ahead and try them out to see what works best for you. **MB**

*A DJ for over 30 years, Mark Evans is also a graphic artist and a Mobile Beat staff member. Mark also works at a local cable station doing video editing.*







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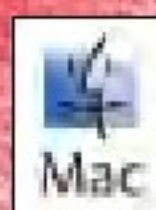
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# Video Production Techniques

BY LORRAINE GRULA •

I think the best way to understand video production is to think of it as a PROCESS. The process is always the same, whether you are producing a simple video or a complex one. Here is a description of the process, step-by-step. It can be broken down into three phases.

## Pre-production • Production • Post-production

Pre-production is probably the most important and the easiest. Even if you want to outsource most of the work, you can (and should) do most of the pre-production yourself. Pre-production includes everything you do before you ever touch the camera.

First, think about what you want your finished video to be. Ask yourself these questions. The answer to these questions will determine most everything else.

1. *Who is your audience?*
2. *What does your audience need or want to hear?*
3. *What does the audience already know?*
4. *What style of video would appeal to your target audience?*
5. *What is your budget?*
6. *What resources do you have readily available?*

Next, think about what you should actually go and get on video tape. Do you need to interview experts? Do you need footage of specific things that represent your subject? Where and how will you

video tape these things? Plan it all out. Make phone calls. Schedule crews, etc.

Write out a first draft of your script. Nothing needs to be carved in stone at this point, but a working script will help you collect all your thoughts.

A good script should be conversational. Pretend you are explaining the subject matter to a friend. What would you say to them? Write that down and then modify it by using more colorful words and better descriptions.

Video scripts are best if they use simple, short sentences. Avoid long, complex words that will be tongue twisters. Read it aloud to test it. Have someone else listen to you and get their reaction.

The production phase includes gathering all of your raw materials. All your raw video and audio. This phase probably takes the most work and know-how, especially if you are shooting everything from scratch.

Post-production is the phase where you take all your raw materials and assemble them into a finished video. Mostly, post-production means video editing. You add titles, music and other special effects during post-production.

There are many wonderful computer video editing programs that do a great job. Personally, I use Final Cut by Apple. This is an advanced video editing program that allows you total control over every single aspect of your video. Most beginners would never want to fool with it. A beginner would be much better off with a simple program like Windows Movie maker or iMovie, which are both free. Those programs rely on pre-produced templates that make it much easier and less complex. Sony Vegas Movie Studio is a popular program that is inexpensive and allows more control than the freebie programs but isn't nearly as complicated as Final Cut. **MB**

## Video Lighting Basics

For many novice video producers, lighting causes lots of worry and seems very complicated. Lighting for video production CAN be complicated, but it certainly doesn't HAVE to be. I specialize in making video as easy as possible, while still maintaining a professional look. I can sum up everything you need to know about lighting in just three bullet points:

- *Direct Light = Harsh*
- *Diffused Light = Soft*
- *What DIRECTION is the light coming from?*

We'll start with the first two points. They are related. Light comes in two forms, direct and diffused. Direct light is harsh and scary looking while diffused light is soft and flattering to the face.

If you remember elementary school physics, light rays always travel in a straight line. Imagine yourself outside at night with a flashlight. You can see the entire beam of light and it is straight. If you want to illuminate an object, you have to shine the flashlight directly on it. This is an example of direct light. It travels in one direction, straight as an arrow.

Diffused light is when the straight light beams hit something reflective and then bounce off it. They bounce in straight lines but usually there are so many straight lines bouncing around that the effect is to have light rays bouncing around every-which-way. A standard incandescent light bulb is painted white on the inside in order to diffuse the light. The light beams hit the white paint and bounce.

Another illustration of direct versus diffused light is to think about being outside on a cloudy day or a sunny day. On a bright, sunny day you have direct light. There are lots of deep shadows and the shadows have distinct edges. On a cloudy day, the clouds diffuse the light. If it's cloudy enough, there will not be any shadows at all.

Since the light is bouncing all around, any potential shadow is filled in by the bouncing light and eliminated.

Generally speaking, you want DIFFUSED light in video production. Unless you are doing a monster movie, diffused light will look best.

Most of the gadgets that come in a professional light kit exist for the sole purpose of diffusing the light. If you do not have a professional lighting kit, you can achieve a diffused effect by pointing your light toward the ceiling or wall and bouncing it. Do not point it at the on-camera talent. They will thank you for it. Not only will it make them look better, but it will keep them from squinting and being dreadfully uncomfortable.

Now let's talk about the third bullet point. What DIRECTION is the light coming from? Is the source of light in front of your on-camera person? Behind them? To the side? Behind? What direction the light is coming from will have a huge impact on how it looks.

Generally speaking, you want the light source to be in front of, or to the side, of your on-camera talent. You do NOT want it behind them unless you are trying to hide their identity. Light coming from behind will create a silhouette. Video producers usually reserve that technique for sleazebags who want to remain anonymous.

This is a mistake I see frequently. People will stand right in front of the window thinking that the light coming from the window will add enough light to make their shot look good. It probably would, IF the on-camera person stands so the light falls on their face and not on their back.

There you have it, the basics of lighting for video production. **MB**

*Lorraine Grula has been a well-respected award winning video professional for over twenty-five years. Lorraine has done virtually every kind of video production imaginable and now shares her expertise on the web. Her blog at [www.VideoProductionTips.com](http://www.VideoProductionTips.com) is full of free information and video tutorials.*



# Video Editing Software

There's a lot of expensive movie editing software on the market, but there are also a number of good, FREE, video editing programs available:

## WINDOWS MOVIE MAKER / WINDOWS LIVE MOVIE MAKER

This is free software for editing videos that is installed on computers running Windows XP, Vista and 7. This software is easy for just about anyone to use. It allows the user to simply drag and drop their items into the order that they want. It allows crossfading of elements and provides a bunch of transitions and effects—enough to produce a basic, professional-looking video.  
[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

## APPLE I-MOVIE

Like Windows Movie Maker, but for the Mac (thus only “free” for Mac users). Incredibly easy to use. Along with a full complement of editing and effect features, it contains more advanced features for managing your content.  
[www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/](http://www.apple.com/ilife/imovie/)

## WAX

True freeware, Wax is a flexible video compositing and special effects program, specifically designed for general purpose use. Wax can create 2D and 3D special effects. With two modes Wax acts as a standalone application for basic users or as a plug-in to other video editors, such as Sony Vegas® and Adobe Premiere®.  
[www.debugmode.com](http://www.debugmode.com)

## ZS4

Formerly known as Zwei-Stein, this is a non-linear, non-destructive

video compositing and editing system which offers many advanced features. You can edit up to 256 video, audio and still image clips, each with up to 64 effects chained serially. Cropping, panning and custom effects are easy with automatic key frames.  
[www.zs4.net](http://www.zs4.net)

## NOT FREE, BUT STILL AFFORDABLE

If you are looking for more professional features, you'll eventually have to part with a few bucks to get software that delivers what you need. While Avid, Adobe, Sony and a few others offer complete, pricey pro software packages, they have also distilled the essence of the their top-level programs into more affordable versions. Check out the following list, courtesy of Top Ten Reviews ([www.toptenreviews.com](http://www.toptenreviews.com)) which rates the top ten video editing packages, all of which are between \$30 and \$100.

CyberLink PowerDirector	<a href="http://www.cyberlink.com">www.cyberlink.com</a>
Corel VideoStudio	<a href="http://www.corel.com">www.corel.com</a>
Adobe Premiere Elements	<a href="http://www.adobe.com">www.adobe.com</a>
Magix Movie Edit Pro	<a href="http://www.magix.com">www.magix.com</a>
Pinnacle Studio	<a href="http://www.pinnaclesys.com">www.pinnaclesys.com</a>
Sony Vegas Movie Studio Platinum	<a href="http://www.sonycreativesoftware.com/vegaspro">www.sonycreativesoftware.com/vegaspro</a>
Roxio Creator	<a href="http://www.roxio.com">www.roxio.com</a>
ShowBiz DVD	<a href="http://www.arcsoft.com">www.arcsoft.com</a>
Corel DVD Movie Factory	<a href="http://www.corel.com">www.corel.com</a>
CyberLink PowerProducer	<a href="http://www.cyberlink.com">www.cyberlink.com</a>

Go directly to <http://video-editing-software-review.toptenreviews.com/> for full details on each program, helpful tips on what to look for in video software, and video tutorials. **MB**

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## DJ EQUIPMENT





# Pro DJ to Photographer/Videographer

VISION EXPERT SNAPS CLEAR PICTURE OF WEDDING DJ'S ROLE

*In this new segment, we'll be featuring conversations between DJs and the other professionals they work alongside on a regular basis: photographers, catering managers and the like. Our aim is not only to provide the DJ point of view, but to give you a better understanding of the people you work with every weekend—how they view their own jobs in relation to yours. Welcome to PRO TO PRO...*

## PRO PHOTOGRAPHER/ VIDEOGRAPHER: TOM CHAPUT

In my area one of the best values in wedding photography and videography is Tom Chaput, who, with only eight years in the wedding business, has etched a clear mark in his trade. From a previous life of office supply sales and a lifelong interest in technology, he began his new career as a videographer working for a multi-op but eventually branched out on his own. He works with his wife Bonita, with the husband and wife team operating either as a tandem photography team or as a camera/video camera combo. I recently had the opportunity to talk with Tom regarding his thoughts on DJs, the wedding business, and the roles we all play as professionals:

**Gerald Johnson:** Let's begin with DJs. During your time in the wedding business, you definitely have noticed that DJs have an effect on the event. In a positive sense, what can you say that DJs add?

**Tom Chaput:** I would say that good DJs help the guests to stay longer and enjoy themselves by providing quality entertainment with the right music. Also, a well-organized DJ can keep the flow and pace of the night moving along—which makes the guests more content and also removes stress and pressure from the bride and groom.

**G J:** So the biggest piece of a DJ's job you would say is "piece of mind?"

**T C:** Absolutely. If the event is planned out well in advance and followed through by the DJ with the right events, announcements, and music at the right times, then the

bride and groom are almost always more relaxed and able to enjoy their reception. We can always tell if the DJ is a professional in the first few moments we work with them by how well they are organized and how well they work with you.

**G J:** On the same note, I bet you have seen times when things didn't quite go so well, and the DJ was at fault...

**T C:** The problem almost always begins with the actual scheduling of the event. In some cases, the DJ will not coordinate with the couple before the event, and as a result the event suffers. Sometimes names are wrong, the event has no flow, and before you know it the party was over because of a lousy DJ.

**G J:** What, then, are the biggest problems you see when working with DJs?

**T C:** I am very surprised at the number of big (multi-op) services that will not divulge who the actual DJ will be before the event. With some services, the couple finds out at the event or the week before, which is definitely very stressful for the bride and groom, because, let's face it—some big services have one or two DJs that are bad. I've also seen DJs that show up dressed completely inappropriately for the event and some that are late. The biggest problem, though, are DJs with "an attitude" and those that make the show about them with too much mic time and cheesy shtick.

**G J:** Let's talk about sales. What is your best sales asset when meeting with new brides and grooms?

**T C:** For us it's looking the part. We have a nice, clean office that serves the sole purpose of meeting with clients and doing work related to the business. Even though it is in my home, the office is on its own floor and is separated from the living space by stairs (meaning you don't walk through the living space to get to the office). The whole space has been

BY GERALD JOHNSON •

completely remodeled and we have our work hanging on the walls with accent spot lighting highlighting it. When couples are introduced to this setting, they see how serious we are about our work instead of a messy kitchen table or kids screaming in the background.

**G J:** I suppose that's the same on our end. If you are a client, you are inevitably going to look at those who have made the investment in a dedicated work space as more professional than those who simply meet with clients in their living room or another location. As for your business, what is your approach to shooting weddings?

**T C:** Our concern is making the process as easy and fun as it can be for the bride, groom, and family. I know from experience that hiring "comfortability" over work that is shown will in the end always produce a better result because the experience making the photos or video will be better. If you hire by personality and not brand, then all will be better.

**G J:** How does your typical planning meeting go?

**T C:** Well, we review with the client what the wedding day will entail and then they normally pick the specific package they want, whether it be length of shooting time with photos or the amount of videos and kinds of effect they want for the videography portion. We're not Soup Nazis, and so our clients really can choose what suits them best.

**G J:** Tom, thanks for your candidness. Are there any parting words you would like to give to the DJs before we wrap up?

**T C:** It is amazing how much a great DJ can enhance an event—and how a lousy DJ can ruin a day. Please don't be the lousy DJ. Prepare, plan, and have fun! **MB**





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# Web Video Well Done

HOW TO SERVE UP THE BEST ONLINE VIDEO EXPERIENCE

BY JIM WEISZ •

**S**tatistics released by ComScore in November 2009 showed that more than 167 million US-based web users watched video online during the previous month. How many videos did they watch total? 28 billion—with 99% of those videos watched on YouTube. Sure, a lot of those are probably the latest viral video that is being shared on Facebook or via e-mail forwards but many businesses are now putting videos on their websites. Just as other businesses are benefiting from having promotional videos on the web, your DJ business could benefit in the same way.

## LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

Just getting started and not sure what video you should be taking? One option is to work with the videographer at any of your events to have them give you footage of you working. Most videographers would probably be willing to give that to you as long as they're credited for shooting the video and you include a link to their website.

If you don't work at a lot of events with videographers another option is shooting the video yourself. You can either set up a camcorder on a tripod or you can have someone come out to film you. Regardless of how you are filmed, try to get the video file in the absolute best quality possible. Just like your website is a reflection on your business, any video you put on your website carries that same distinction. People will get turned off very quickly if the video is fuzzy and pixilated or if the sound is really bad.

Most digital cameras have a built in video feature that you can use to shoot basic videos; however the quality usually isn't that great, especially in a low light situation. However, if you have a newer digital SLR camera the video quality on that may be pretty good. Some of the latest DSLRs even shoot video in HD. A final solution, and probably the best option outside of using footage from a videographer, is to invest in a decent camcorder. You can either get a traditional camcorder that will give you a lot of flexibility or one of the mini flip camcorders, which probably would suffice for video testimonials. Whatever you decide to use, take some practice footage and check it out to make sure it's giving you the quality you're looking for.

Once you have some video content ready to put online you'll need to edit it. These days doing basic video editing can be pretty painless. There is a ton of software out there you can buy for video editing but if you'll just be creating some videos for use online, Windows Movie Maker just might be enough. The software is free and pretty easy to use. You can use it to add a custom intro and

ending that includes your company name, phone number and website. If you get the video from a videographer you could even pay them for their time to edit the video and create your graphics for the beginning and end.

## CONTENT

When deciding what content to include in your videos try to think about what your client will want to see. If you're just getting started perhaps you should have a video of you doing introductions, a video with some dancing and then a video with a testimonial. You could even do a short video that chronicles an entire event but be sure to keep it short—two to three minutes at the maximum.

Even if you don't plan on shooting a lot video at your events, a good idea might be to start getting video testimonials. They really capture the feeling of the brides and grooms and give a sense of realism to the testimonial. Anyone can write words on a page and say that a past client said something nice about your company; but if you have a dozen videos from your past clients, THAT can really speak volumes.

Another option is to create educational videos that are helpful to brides and grooms. You could shoot some video on creative introductions, how to choose the music for your wedding, how to use the interactive tools on your website or one of hundreds of other topics. If you post those videos to YouTube, along with tags and descriptions that will help people in your area find them, it could be a source of leads. If someone sees your video and likes you or the information you're giving it could mean a booking.

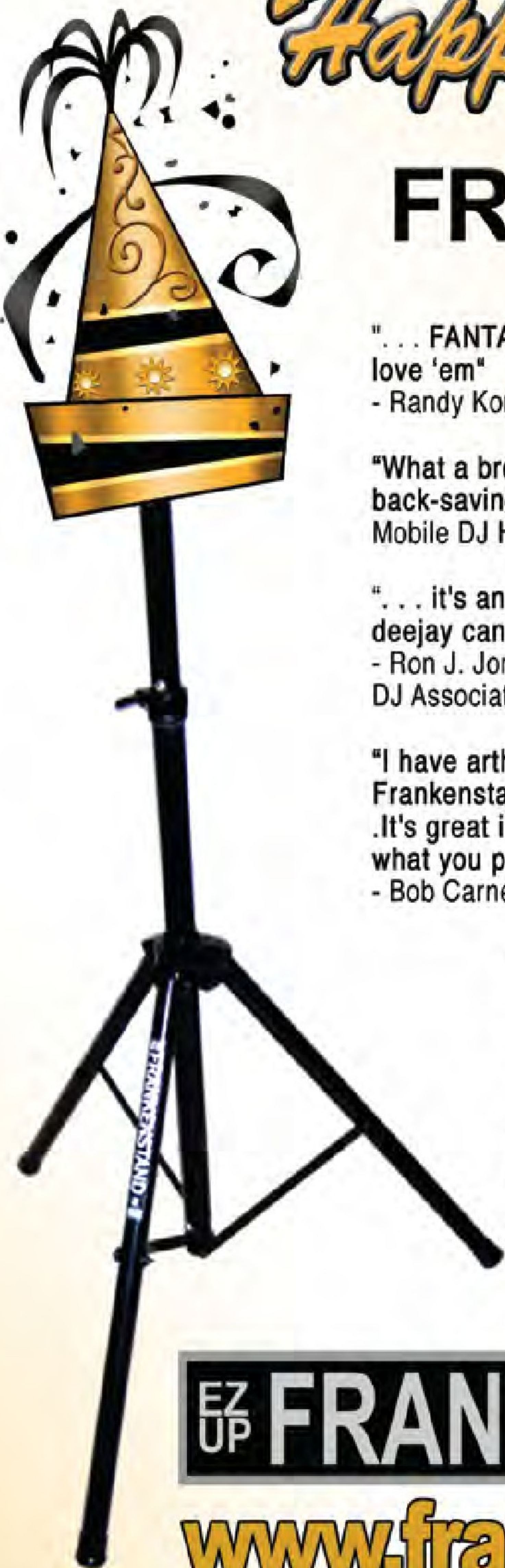
## GETTING VIDEO ONLINE

YouTube is the most popular video website on the internet and is a viable resource for hosting your videos. YouTube recommends video to be formatted as H.264, MPEG-2 or MPEG-4, with a resolution of 640x360 or 480x360 and 30 frames per second. The maximum file size for files uploaded to YouTube is 1 GB. The benefit to putting your videos on YouTube is that in addition to putting them on your website, people may also find them on YouTube or through search engines. YouTube videos are also very easy to share and most people who use the internet on a regular basis are familiar with YouTube and how to use it.

In addition to YouTube, there are hundreds of other websites that will host your video for free. If you do consider an alternative to YouTube make sure it is a reputable site that won't put advertising before your video. It should also be reliable: You wouldn't want someone to try to watch one of your videos only to get an error message.

Another option is to host the video file on your own website. If you want to host the file on your website you'll need to make sure your host allows streaming videos. A quick check with one of the more popular hosts, GoDaddy, shows they do not allow streaming videos on their basic website hosting accounts. If your host does allow streaming videos, you'll want to make sure you





# Happy New Year!

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### WORK IN PROGRESS

The whole process of producing, editing and preparing to post your video online a video takes a lot of work. Knowing that fact when going into a project like this will help you develop a reasonable timeline for when you can expect to complete it. It will take some time to get the video you want to use, edit it and put it online. So make sure to do your homework on how you'll shoot

the video, where you'll host the files, what content you want to include and how often you'll update it. Then you can get to work on getting your company on the online video bandwagon. **MB**

*Jim Weisz has been a DJ primarily serving the wedding and school dance markets since 1999. In 2003, Jim relocated to Dallas from Chicago to take a position at TM Studios (formerly TM Century & JonesTM). He has spoken at DJ conventions about websites and has also written more than two dozen articles for Mobile Beat about websites and a variety of other topics. Jim can be reached at [jim@discoverydjs.com](mailto:jim@discoverydjs.com).*



## Site Assessment

For each issue, I chose from websites submitted to me for review. If you would like your website to be considered for review in a future issue of *Mobile Beat*, send an e-mail to [jim@discoverydjs.com](mailto:jim@discoverydjs.com). The website for this issue is <http://www.evannine.com>.

### GOOD STUFF:

Normally I don't comment on videos on websites but since the topic of this issue's column is video it's fitting that Evan's website has a video. The video is obviously well produced, with what looks like footage from a professional videographer. The editing is very well done and shows the various aspects of what Evan does as the emcee for one of his weddings. This is a great example of using video on your website.

Phone number right at the top of the home page.

Wedding pictures page is a good idea. Do you have testimonials from those clients you could put below their pictures?

### SUGGESTIONS:

In regards to the video, while it is well-produced and flows nicely, it is pretty lengthy at just under 10 minutes. Some people might watch all 10 minutes but as mentioned in the column, it is best to keep each video to 2-3 minutes. For a video chronicling a wedding from start to finish you can get away with making it longer but you still want to keep it around 5 minutes or less.

Drop the doorway page so a visitor to your website doesn't have to click the link that says "Click here to enter my site." Seems a bit redundant to tell someone to click a link to go to your website when they are already on your website. Doorway pages also aren't search engine friendly.

You only have buttons at the bottom of your pages, which is annoying since then you have to scroll to the bottom of every page to find more information.

The text is very hard to read with the blinking lights in the background.

You have text that is underlined that isn't a link. The only text on a website that should be underlined is a link.

Remember that if you want people to find your website using search engines, you have to include information about your company (name, phone, geographic area, etc.) on several pages on your website.

### WRAP-UP

The website looks very homemade and the blinking lights are very distracting. Just as we as DJs recommend hiring a professional, I would recommend hiring a professional to re-design your website. I had my own website designed by a pro because I know my limitations. It does look like you know enough to keep your site up to date and running well, so perhaps you can just get a website designed and then you can maintain it. When working on the new website, I would recommend writing some content so that every page has a few paragraphs of text including key words and phrases that describe your service. That would help with search engine positioning as well as give prospective clients some additional information on your DJ company.





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# Heads Up!

MAKE 'EM VIDEO STARS WITH BOOGIE HEADS

BY MARC ANDREWS •

Every couple of months we add a new feature to my company's arsenal of attractions. Previous additions have included airbrush tattoos and a photo booth, building on a foundation of arcade machines and home console video games repackaged and pumped up for mobile events. Our latest entertainment weapon is Boogie Heads ([www.boogie-heads.com](http://www.boogie-heads.com)). Boogie Heads allows the guests at your event to have themselves "dubbed" into a music video from one of a constantly expanding selection of songs. Through green screen technology they are pulled into the music video and at the end they get a copy of it on DVD.

## THE HARDWARE

Three big ATA cases enclose 95% of what you need to run this system. All you need to add is a sound system and stools for the guests. Case #1 contains a 42" LCD television well mounted and secured. Case #2 contains all the necessary gear, such as the camera, tripods, green screen cloths, photo lamps, and camera. It also carries the software DVDs that you'll need, including the music video content and a helpful tutorial about the equipment.



Case #3 is the one that really contains the magic. Nicely racked up inside you will find two LCD TVs (one for you, one for the people in the video), four DVD recorders, and one high-end DVD deck for playing the source video. And don't forget the Green Screen Magic Box. Everything in this box comes completely prewired and set to go; just pull the top off the case (use it to hold up the TV in Case #1) and plug it in. Once you know how to run it, you are talking about 15 minutes of total setup time from the time you roll in to being ready to start the first "recording session."

## THE SOFTWARE

The system comes with a couple copies of the DVDs that are prepared for you to make the videos from. They include dancers/performers that you are putting the heads on. The library ranges from "Achy Breaky Heart" to "Lady Marmalade," from "Baby Got Back" to James Brown's "I Feel Good." The videos each have multiple cuts, depending on how many male and female performers you are putting in the video. New videos are being produced every year and are free to active Boogie Heads licensees. The licensing comes from purchasing the blank DVD-RW discs from Boogie Heads at normal market rates. Chris Hampton of Boogie Heads told me that "Right now we have a library of 106 videos drawn from 40 popular songs and we are just about to triple that library to appeal to a larger demographic and audience. We are going to have those songs out hopefully by the end of 2009!"

## OVERALL

While I have seen similar units from other companies, they are usually computer-based, where Boogie Heads video production is totally hardware-based. The system has been rock solid so far and I don't anticipate having any trouble with it. And even more importantly, competing systems may require an approximately \$25,000 investment and \$2-\$3 per disc royalties; Boogie Heads is only \$15,000 with a \$1 per disc royalty. With an average booking rate at around \$800 with cost of operation of under \$100 (not including the investment and staffing), this is a nice profit item for our company. An expensive system without a doubt, but well worth the investment, especially if you are the first in your market to get one, or if you do lots of after-proms, festivals and other such events. **MB**

[www.boogie-heads.com](http://www.boogie-heads.com)

## Making Tracks

(Look for a greatly expanded Boogie Heads library to be available in the first quarter of 2010, right around the company's appearance at MBLVX. —Ed.)

<i>Lady Marmalade</i>	<i>Baby Got Back</i>	<i>Who Let The Dogs Out</i>
<i>I Feel Good</i>	<i>Too Sexy</i>	<i>Play That Funky Music</i>
<i>RESPECT</i>	<i>Thats The Way (I Like It)</i>	<i>Wild Thing</i>
<i>Old Time Rock and Roll</i>	<i>Whip It</i>	<i>If You Think I'm Sexy</i>
<i>Sweet Home Alabama</i>	<i>Brown Eyed Girl</i>	<i>Getting Hot in Here</i>
<i>Super Freak</i>	<i>Good Lovin'</i>	<i>Margaritaville</i>
<i>I Will Survive</i>	<i>Mony Mony</i>	<i>Everybody Have Fun</i>
<i>Achy Breaky Heart</i>	<i>Get The Party Started</i>	<i>Tonight</i>
<i>La Bamba</i>	<i>My Humps</i>	<i>Man I Feel Like A Woman</i>
<i>ABC</i>	<i>Girls Just Wanna Have Fun</i>	<i>Summer of '69</i>
<i>What I Like About You</i>	<i>Welcome to the Jungle</i>	<i>Born To Be Wild</i>
<i>Brick House</i>	<i>Jailhouse Rock</i>	<i>California Girls</i>
<i>Car Wash</i>	<i>Hey Ya</i>	<i>These Boots Are Made For Walkin'</i>
<i>New York, New York</i>	<i>Material Girl</i>	



# Pioneer After a Year

A/V MIXING SYSTEM REVEALS VALUE DURING A YEAR OF SERVICE

BY J. RICHARD ROBERTS •

**I**t's no secret that video events can be tricky without the right equipment. Most of the time, these systems are more sensitive than audio systems due to a multitude of issues including cabling, discs, switchers and projectors. Then, even more problems can arise when outside sources are brought into the mix, such as interactive text message projection, ambient videos, and live crowd-cams. Thankfully, this all changed just over a year ago when we began using a brand new Pioneer SVM system. Comprised of two Pioneer DVJ-1000 players teamed with one Pioneer SVM-1000 Audio/Video Mixer, it armed us with what just might be the ultimate video system.

## SUCCESS WITH SVM

As mentioned when it was featured in this publication around the time of the product's release, the SVM-1000 is much more than a simple video mixer. In fact, it interfaces with numerous feeds and combines them with killer effects, awesome transitions, and even text overlays, in a touchscreen format. This means that I no longer have switchers, mixers, and DVD players all hooked into one tangled mess in my booth. The SVM mixer allows not only touchscreen flexibility but also the ability to monitor the master output without need for a second monitor screen. Mobility is guaranteed as it all transports in one coffin-style ATA flight case that could easily fit into my car just as well as my 24' box truck.

Since beginning to use the system, I have noticed my company's video dance parties going more smoothly due the seamless video playback from the Pioneer DVJs combined with glitchless transition control from the SVM. The text overlay functions provide a great crowd-motivating tool, as well as a way to make important announcements on the fly. (No longer do I have to interrupt a great song/video to announce that it is "last call for pictures" to make the photographer happy. I simply overlay the video with that same message.)

## PRESENTATION IS KEY

Along with the actual professional functionality, the sleek, high-tech look of the SVM unit lends an extra level of credibility to my DJs when they work as VJs. At school video dance parties, when students from today's digital generation see a "pro" using home DVD players or a laptop to mix the video, they automatically think that it's something they can do themselves—no big deal. (And they're probably right!) However, when our Pioneer-equipped VJ rolls in with the ability to scratch and beat-mix music videos, integrate awesome ambient videos, and drop in hilarious pop-culture clips, all with the highest visual quality, then the value of having us as their entertainment becomes much more apparent. We are clearly worth the price.

In other words, at a video dance party, having two turntables

and a touch screen mixer with multiple inputs, cue points, effects, and other creative mixing tools can really point up the contrast between an ordinary DJ who happens to play videos and a true VJ who is there to make the party unique and memorable.

## SVM AT MBLVX

If you really want a good look at what the Pioneer gear can do, make sure to be at MBLVX—the upcoming Mobile Beat Las Vegas trade show for 2010. Mobile Beat will be utilizing an SVM-1000 / dual DVJ-1000 system in a big way at MBLVX. This year the parties will be more video-centric, with screens supplied by DJScreen.com and custom content created exclusively for the nighttime events. The SVM-1000 will be used to coordinate custom videos, ambient video, a feed from a texting service, video feed from the stage, and also live video on three screens in the performance area. According to Mobile Beat trade show A/V Chief Jake Feldman, "The SVM-1000 is the perfect fit for those parties, because, num-



ber one, it is a DJ-oriented production unit that can give great results right out of the box, and, number two, because it is so flexible for a big production like ours, with a lot of inputs and playback capabilities."

## AN INVESTMENT IN VIDEO SUCCESS

While I will have to admit that buying the unit was a major investment (list price \$8,000, street price under \$6,000), it's turned out to be just that: a great investment, even in this currently chilly economic climate. After a year of service, it has more than paid for itself. The positive impact it has had on my video dances and also in adding the capability to handle a broader range of video events, has made the outlay well worth it. The SVM system gives my company a competitive edge in the lucrative school market that we have worked hard to master; learning the SVM unit has helped us "step up our game" on the video dance party side of the business. While some may balk at the price tag, without the SVM-1000, I would be balking right now at the lost earnings. **MB**

[www.pioneerdj.com](http://www.pioneerdj.com)



# B-52: The Power of Family

AVI EL-KISS BRINGS A LIFETIME OF EXPERIENCE AND A FAMILY FOCUS TO B-52'S POWERFUL SOUND PRODUCTS

**“T**wenty-eight years ago, my son and I purchased a small table saw and single sheet of plywood from a hardware store. We spent seven hours building our first speaker cabinet. I remember that day vividly because we didn't just set out to build a speaker cabinet - we were determined to create a great one. Within 24 hours, we presented the cabinet sample to local distributors in downtown Los Angeles. We took orders for more than a hundred of them, and that is how it all started.”

So says company president Eli El-Kiss about the origins of B-52 Professional, aka E.T.I. Sound Systems, Inc., in a note on the company website ([www.B-52pro.com](http://www.B-52pro.com)). Almost three decades later, Eli and son Avi have built the business into a powerhouse that sells tens of thousands of products each year, offering more than 70 sound systems for mobile DJs, live sound, permanent installations and musicians. 2009 marked the largest expansion of the B-52 product line in the company's history, including the new PRODIGY, a streamlined, economized version of the PRODIGY FX, the all-in-one mixer/multi-format player that took the DJ industry by storm in 2008. In all its gear, B-52 strives to provide customers with innovation and reliability at a fair price.

**Mobile Beat:** Avi, tell us a little bit about where B-52 has come from, where it's going, and tell us about yourself.

**Avi El-Kiss:** Well, we're a family-owned company. I've been doing this basically my entire life, since I was 8 years old. My dad and I long ago...had some car installation audio stores. And we progressed into starting to make our own car audio speaker cabinets...one day we went to a Home Depot-type store, bought a sheet of wood, bought a small panel saw, [and built] a car audio speaker cabinet. We were excited about that. And then it progressed to the point where we were building 1,000 cabinets per day with contracts with Tandy, which is Radio Shack. And then that grew into pro audio and then continued to grow. So it's basically been a company that started by making one cabinet...Over 10 years ago, we stopped making anything car audio and now focus on pro audio, guitar, and DJ-related products. So it's been a fun trip.

**M B:** I've seen you guys go from generic cabinets, into very unique products, into stuff really deeply engineered. And with things like the Prodigy FX, you're out there with unique products that really listen to the mobile disc jockey.

**A E:** Well, our mentality is design first. In other words, we

could easily, like many companies, go overseas to a company that makes 500 different products and look at mixers and CD players and go, okay, slap money on that. Let me import it, make a few bucks and build the company that way.

We're taking a completely different approach...to somewhat out-think our competitors in the sense that we look at where there's a need in the market.

And the Prodigy and Prodigy FX were definitely products that I envisioned. There were a lot of less complex, very unprofessional, all-in-one CD player/mixers, but nobody addressed the fact that if we made this professional, if we made it high end, if we made everything work, if we made it reliable with all of the features that a DJ wants, if we made it convenient, if we included a case, if we did everything right then there is a need for an all-in-one. And after three years, maybe more, four engineers, hundreds of thousands of dollars, we launched the Prodigy FX.



And we were fearful of the fact that maybe some customers knowing us primarily as a speaker company might not accept us in this world. But the amazing thing was it was immediate. It's not like we had this gigantic advertising campaign. As soon as it hit the stores it sold right away. As soon as you put your hands on it you felt that this was a professional piece of equipment and we sold well over 10,000 units

of just the Prodigy FX alone in less than a year and a half, about a year. So the acceptance has been great.

Now that the Prodigy FX has really been a mainstream, great selling product, we decided to introduce the Prodigy which is a scaled down version of the Prodigy FX. It's got less of the things that some people might not use, like the digital effects...But [what is] pretty revolutionary with the Prodigy, is that we made our jog wheels touch sensitive. So for \$799, [you] get dual CD/MP3 players with a four-channel VCA...

...And the funny thing—here's the kicker—we introduced the Prodigy and [thought] that the Prodigy's going to take away from the sales of the Prodigy FX. It's very natural that the less expensive unit is going to cannibalize some of the sales of the more expensive unit. And what we're seeing is something absolutely incredible: ...the Prodigy FX is actually taking a really noticeable spike [in sales]...But what's the dynamic? I think when you have one SKU in the store it only gets so much attention. When you have two, now you've given the customer an option...along with the Prodigy FX, the Prodigy is giving a lot more attention to this all-in-one concept...Guys are touching the Prodigy and saying, "You know what? For an extra \$400 I'll buy the more professional unit." So the two are really feeding off each other...[and] we



have several more products coming in the Prodigy line that are now in development.

**MB:** I can hear the excitement in your voice about this whole project. I know it's been your baby... But let's go back to where you guys made your name: as being the big bass company...

**AE:** Well, the speaker area is our base... We're expanding in the sense that we're going to have a lot of rack mount amplifiers... we're very, very successful with our MX, our folded horn. We... launched our third generation, the V3 folded horn subwoofers. And every time we make the next version I basically say, this is it. This is as good as it gets.... And then two years later, three years later, we find another way to tweak it.

[Editor's note: At this point Avi spoke at length about B-52's popular Matrix series of portable PA systems, but we had to cut this section to fit the space available. For the complete interview, please go to [www.mobilebeat.com](http://www.mobilebeat.com).]

...And the other thing is a lot of manufacturers are using chip amps on many of their amplifiers. We're using discreet output power supplies. Our amplifiers don't thermal. Our amplifiers don't break down. I mean, on our new amplifier that we're using our active 15, dual 15, and subwoofer. We sold thousands of these. I can't remember a repair.

So these amplifiers are built like pigs; they're way overbuilt. So if you buy our active subs or our active anything, this stuff doesn't break down. If it does it's extremely, extremely rare. And so we do overbuild our products and that's how we've built our reputation, by the fact that you can rely on our equipment.

Listen, DJs, musicians, the people that buy our gear are not hobbyists. Of course there's a certain segment of it of a kid that's buying equipment for his bedroom and he wants to screw around with his CD player and his mixer and scratch. But that's not primarily the huge portion of our customers. The huge portion of our customers are people that charge money for their event.

So when my son was born I hired a DJ, right? I'm only going to have one chance to celebrate the birth of my son. If his equipment fails, he's ruined my event and I'll never have an opportunity to get that back. So when we design our equipment, we have that in mind. It shouldn't break down. It can't break down. And when you keep refining and having that mentality it's not about how many dollars we put in our pocket; it never has been. It's about making equipment that's going to work day in, day out, and that you can rely on it.

...What we always do is refine everything we make. We're always tweaking. We're always making slight improvements... if we find a way to hold the Neutrik connector to the panel a little bit better than we did before, for us this is like, "Wow, look at how wonderful." Some of the things my wife gets bored to death about me talking about how we're able to make a screw work better... If we can find a way to make it better, we're there.

And I think if you do that over and over and over again, year after year—at this point decade after decade—and if you take care of your customers, if a guy has an issue, you take care of him. The answer is not always going to be, "Yes,

sir. I'll overnight it." But it's going to be, "Let me solve your problem. Let me show you that I care and I'll do everything I can to solve your problem."

And so what we've done from day one is to make sure that myself, my father, the people that run the company are accessible. If a DJ wants to get me on the phone, it's very easy. A lot of people have my cell phone number. If you have a problem, you can call the owner direct—it doesn't matter how big we get—and if you have an issue I'm going to try to help you out or direct you to the people in my company that are going to help you out. But we're not going to leave you hung out to dry. That is important.

**MB:** You obviously are involved in our conference, especially the Las Vegas show, and you're very approachable. People can pass ideas by you, and I'm sure you take those ideas and pull them into your development. I know I've sent people to you before and you've taken care of the issues. Positive and negative, you'll listen to it both ways.

**AE:** Well, listen, I'm only as great as the people who surround me, as the people that give me advice. I'm not a DJ. I'm not a guitarist. But I listen to DJs and I listen to guitarists and I listen to musicians and I really listen to what they have to say... some of the best ideas that we have are from a guy walking up to you at a show and going, "Hey, you know what? It would be really cool if it had this."



The ultimate guys that we rely on, that I personally rely on, are the guys in my factory. I mean, literally, when we make a speaker system and all my audio engineers show

me the frequency response curves and the sensitivity and how beautiful it sounds, and all my salesmen are going, "Yes. Make them. We're there." Ultimately we go, we set it up in the warehouse in the worst environment, we bring in the girls that carpet the boxes, the guys that cut the wood, the guys that are not involved in the engineering, and they'll shoot you straight and we'll play it. And we'll put the competition side by side and say, "Which one sound better? How do we make this better?"... unless they tell us, "Yes, I would buy this," chances are I'm not putting it out in the market...

**MB:** Anything else you want to say to wrap this up?

**AE:** I guess there's only one thing which has to be said—well, I absolutely want to say—which is a gigantic thank you to all those people that have supported us over the years... somebody at some point had to take a chance on B-52 as an unknown. But enough of those people did that allowed us to make a real company out of this whole thing. And so without those guys and girls who supported us we wouldn't be here anymore and so we thank you.

And we will continue to do everything we can to bring you products and give you service that make your lives easier, better. And so just a big old thank you to everybody that's been a part of the B-52 family. **MB**

[www.B-52pro.com](http://www.B-52pro.com)



# Get Moving to the *nextbeat*

A DREAM COME TRUE FOR THE DJ WHO LIKES TO MIX IT UP WITH THE CROWD

BY JOHNATHAN LEWIS, DJ TUTOR •

**S**o what is nextbeat? It's basically a hand-held, all-in-one wireless DJ mix station that will let you mix two tunes while you are away from your DJ console. It comes with a 2 GB flash memory card that you can load up with tracks and plug into the back of the unit. With the use of a small jog wheel your files are easily accessible. Within a few clicks you can have two tracks ready to go. So now the fun begins. The hand-held device can be removed from its base unit by pressing GO on the top right.

## CONTROL OVERVIEW

What I love about this is it's so easy to use. No 100-page instruction book; just a few easy steps. The loop control on the base unit lets you see the start and end of the loop as two lines over the wave readout on the screen. If your loop is slightly out of sync, you can change the in or out points with two dials just above the loop in and out buttons. Then at the base of the screen you have 1/1, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8 and directly below the readout you have four buttons that can cut your loop up from the whole amount to 1/8th and serve as trigger points. Then at the left hand side of the hand held device you have 1, 11, 111, 1111 and pressing these plays your loops without the need for the base unit.

On the hand-held unit we have low, mid, high EQ controls and trim for each channel so you get to EQ on the move. Effects are also provided: LFP (Low Frequency Pass), HPF (High Frequency Pass), FLG (flanger), PHS (phaser), DLY (delay) and REV (reverb). You have controls to set the timing and amount of effect in the mix. A touch-sensitive pad lets you control the effects as well. Along with sounding great, this will look good while you are on the move in the mix. Below the effects controls you have four buttons: A, CUE, play/pause and B. These choose which deck you're playing or cueing. They function just like a top-of-the-line tabletop CD player.

To keep everything in perfect sync, a master tempo control and auto BPM sensor keep loops, samples and effects all locked into the beat.

Other standard features include mic and phones inputs on the base unit (1/4" jacks), dials for headphones volume, master cue, mic level and master out. At the rear you have right and left out for A and B channels, master out, digital out and a USB port for your PC.

## GETTING IN TOUCH

Moving on to the touch-sensitive area, the center part can be used for the effects, as explained, but you can also use it for scratching and sample playback. With the aid of the base unit you can sample four segments music, and then when you touch the center area you can play the samples back by pressing top right, top left, bottom right or bottom left. This is great for adding an extra twist to the mix.

Around the center area you have five more touch pads. Top right and left are pitch controls which you use by sliding your finger up and down to increase or decrease the speed of the track being played. For fine adjustment, tap at the top to speed up or at the bottom to slow down. Below these are volume controls, and at the base you get your crossfader, all touch-sensitive, controlled by sliding your fingers.

## IT'S IN THE WAY THAT YOU USE IT

The unit could be used "as is" but to me it would work well with a set of CD players and a mixer. You could just go direct to an external mixer.

So in conclusion, this is for the DJ who feels the groove, loves the vibe of the music and is not happy with just dancing behind the DJ gear; now he or she can get out and boogie amongst the crowd...and really move to the groove. **MB**

[www.nextbeat.net](http://www.nextbeat.net)





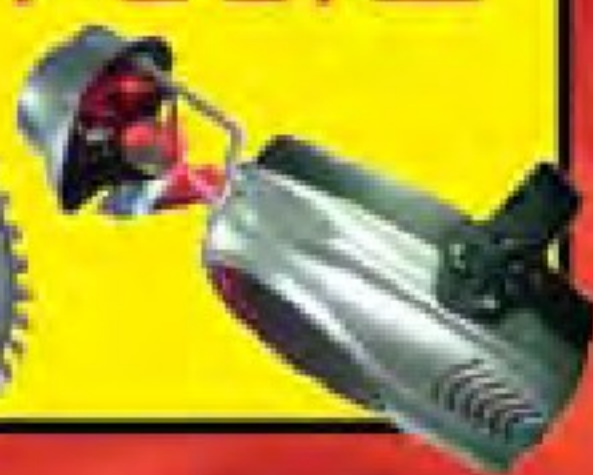
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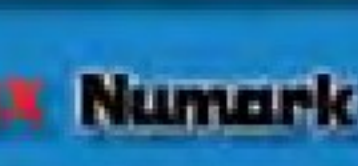


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There are many things that we take for granted, including the privilege of living in a country based on freedom. However, when you are in a room full of United States Marines you pause to reflect on the deep sacrifices that these brave men and women, and thousands like them, have endured so that all Americans can enjoy the peace and security we enjoy on a daily basis.

Recently it was my honor to entertain at the 234th birthday party for the United States Marine Corps in Charleston, SC. With over 600 people in attendance, it was one of the biggest events of the year for our company and one that we were proud to participate in the celebration. I served six years in the Navy as a Machinist Mate aboard the nuclear submarine John C. Calhoun (SSBN 630) and I give all due respect to every branch of service for their roles in our nation's defense. However, it is the Marine Corps that we typically think of as those with the courage and conviction to be the first to step forward to face whatever dangers await. The annual birthday ball is an opportunity to celebrate the Marine's past victories and to encourage those who still serve our country so bravely in places like Al Anbar in the west of Iraq to Helmand Province in the south of Afghanistan.

The Marines in attendance, many in uniform, ranged in age from one young recruit barely out of high school, to Marines who served in historic battles during World War II. Whether currently serving our nation or having last borne arms for our continued liberty over 60 years ago, these patriots were all Marines. For many, their bravery had been acknowledged with our country's most distinguished awards. Tribute was also given that evening to the men and women who had left the comforts of home behind, marched into battle and gave the last full measure for our freedom. Now, it was time for my company to play a small role in the celebration and entertain these troops, those currently serving as well as proud veterans.

### MUSICAL BATTLE PLAN

One challenge that I faced was playing to such a large and varied audience and to attempt to satisfy all those there. With approximately a seventy year span between the ages of the youngest Marine and the oldest Marine there, it meant seven decades of different music was expected to be played at some time during the evening. Naturally, this also included several different genres of music, which made the night that much more challenging, yet certainly rewarding. With twenty eight years of DJ experience under my headphones, I knew this night would require my sharpest skills of mixing the music to get and keep everybody on the dance floor during

# Entertaining the Troops, Past and Present

PLAYING A 234TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION? OORAH!

BY JAY MAXWELL •

## AS TIME GOES BY... TOP 10s FROM 7 DECADES

1940s

SONG		ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	IN THE MOOD	GLENN MILLER	40	164
2	AS TIME GOES BY	WILSON DOOLEY	42	62
3	PENNSYLVANIA 6-5000	GLENN MILLER	40	75
4	BOOGIE WOOGIE BUGLE BOY	ANDREWS SISTERS	44	173
5	FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS	NAT KING COLE	48	
6	MOONLIGHT SERENADE	GLENN MILLER	40	82
7	STRING OF PEARLS	GLENN MILLER	41	132
8	SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY	LES BROWN	45	
9	CHATANOOGA CHOO CHOO	GLENN MILLER	41	153
10	STARDUST	BENNY GOODMAN	40	130

1950s	1	UNFORGETTABLE	NAT KING COLE	51	83
	2	GREAT BALLS OF FIRE	JERRY LEE LEWIS	58	160
	3	ALL SHOOK UP	ELVIS PRESLEY	57	148
	4	STAGGER LEE	LLOYD PRICE	59	144
	5	IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT	FIVE SATINS	56	72
	6	MACK THE KNIFE	BOBBY DARIN	59	168
	7	EARTH ANGEL	PENGUINS	55	75
	8	HOUNDDOG	ELVIS PRESLEY	56	172
	9	ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK	BILL HALEY	55	182
	10	KISS TO BUILD A DREAM ON	LOUIS ARMSTRONG	51	

1960s	1	BROWN EYED GIRL	VAN MORRISON	67	150
	2	MY GIRL	TEMPTATIONS	65	106
	3	BUILD ME UP BUTTERCUP	FOUNDATIONS	69	134
	4	TWIST	CHUBBY CHECKER	60	156
	5	WHAT A WONDERFUL WORLD	LOUIS ARMSTRONG	67	72
	6	AT LAST	ETTA JAMES	60	59
	7	UNCHAINED MELODY	RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS	65	66
	8	MUSTANG SALLY	WILSON PICKETT	66	110
	9	RESPECT	ARETHA FRANKLIN	67	115
	10	CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE	ELVIS PRESLEY	62	68



## 1970s

	SONG	ARTIST	YEAR	BPM
1	BRICK HOUSE	COMMODORES	77	107
2	SHOUT	OTIS DAY	78	200
3	WE ARE FAMILY	SISTER SLEDGE	79	118
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	LYNYRD SKYNYRD	74	100
5	WONDERFUL TONIGHT	ERIC CLAPTON	78	48
6	OLD TIME ROCK & ROLL	BOB SEGER	79	126
7	DANCING QUEEN	ABBA	77	101
8	PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC	WILD CHERRY	76	109
9	STAYING ALIVE	BEE GEES	77	104
10	LET'S GET IT ON	MARVIN GAYE	73	81

## 1980s

1	LOVE SHACK	B-52's	89	135
2	YOU SHOOK ME ALL NIGHT	AC/DC	80	128
3	CELEBRATION	KOOL & GANG	81	122
4	POUR SOME SUGAR ON ME	DEF LEPPARD	88	85
5	SEXUAL HEALING	MARVIN GAYE	82	95
6	SUPER FREAK	RICK JAMES	81	132
7	KISS	PRINCE	86	112
8	BILLIE JEAN	MICHAEL JACKSON	83	118
9	PUSH IT	SALT-N-PEPA	88	130
10	IT TAKES TWO	ROB BASE	88	112

## 1990s

1	ELECTRIC (SLIDE) BOOGIE	MARCIA GRIFFITHS	90	108
2	BABY GOT BACK	SIR MIX-A-LOT	92	130
3	C'MON 'N' RIDE IT (THE TRAIN)	QUAD CITY DJs	96	136
4	ICE ICE BABY	VANILLA ICE	90	117
5	LET ME CLEAR MY THROAT	DJ KOOL	96	103
6	COTTON EYE JOE	REDNEX	95	132
7	HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY	ROD STEWART	93	72
8	MACARENA	LOS DEL RIO	95	103
9	BOOT SCOOTIN BOOGIE	BROOKS & DUNN	92	130
10	JUMP JIVE AN WAIL	BRIAN SETZER	98	202

## 2000s

1	CUPID SHUFFLE	CUPID	2007	143
2	CHA CHA SLIDE	MR. C - CASPER	2001	122
3	HEY YA!	OUTKAST	2003	159
4	YEAH!	USHER	2004	105
5	COME AWAY WITH ME	NORAH JONES	2002	81
6	SEXYBACK	JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE	2006	117
7	LOW (APPLE BOTTOM JEANS)	FLO RIDA	2007	128
8	GET LOW	LIL JON-YING YANG TWINS	2003	101
9	SINGLE LADIES (PUT A RING ON IT)	BEYONCE	2008	97
10	BOOM BOOM POW	BLACK EYED PEAS	2009	130

the evening. Even with the best preparations, including making a list of the most requested songs from each decade (see this issue's list), I knew to be ready with everything from big band to hip-hop. At the event, corporals, generals and all ranks in between asked for music genres from salsa to country and I gladly complied with their choices.

## ALL IN GOOD ORDER

Interestingly, the right mix of music wasn't the only important element of the evening. One of their chief concerns was that the sound amplification would be sufficient for all to hear as they presented their speeches during the ceremonial phase of the evening. To accommodate this, I ran four speakers stretched out with a long line of speaker cables all along the front wall of the huge ballroom. Also, they wanted to show a video with a message from General James T. Conway, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and run the sound through our system so that guests in all three ballrooms could hear it. Also, though I played dinner music before the dancing began, there were other forms of musical entertainment in the early part of the night, including members of the Marine Band and a Citadel cadet playing the bagpipes. All of this was to be timed out with Marine Corps precision and I was involved in two days worth of practice to ensure that it was perfect.

When they first requested that I participate in the practices, I was not quite sure what purpose it would serve. Looking back, I'm glad that I spent the time with the Marines to get every possible glitch worked out. For instance, at one time only three of the four speakers worked during the playing of the video. It was a curiosity that all four speakers worked for the microphone as well as for playing music but one speaker failed to play during the video. Luckily, it turned out to be a function of their laptop's settings for DVD playback, and was easily fixed during practice. I also assisted with numerous microphone checks during practice for the primary speakers, to make sure no feedback would distract from their speeches.

We felt a sense of "victory" when we read their returned customer service survey: "I hope we can work together next year. We got kudos all around for the evening, and your music was a big portion at the end." What a thrill it was to serve the men and women in Marine uniforms at their annual birthday ball, simply by entertaining them with an uplifting evening of music. The dance floor was packed all night. No request was denied and my mission of spinning every tune requested was accomplished each time I heard any one of these magnificent men or women say, "Play something we can dance to!" **MB**



## Legendary Recordings Honored

On November 24, 2009, The Recording Academy® announced the newest additions to its GRAMMY Hall Of Fame®, adding 25 recordings to a timeless list that now includes 851 titles. The Hall Of Fame serves as a celebration and reminder of the triumphs and achievements of the recording arts. Selections are drawn from all categories of music, acknowledging the diversity of musical expression for which The Recording Academy has be-



The Isley Brothers

come renowned. The list and recordings now reside as a collection on display at the GRAMMY Museum®.

"This year's GRAMMY Hall Of Fame inductees highlight a diverse array of masterpiece recordings that have had a profound impact on our musical history," said Neil Portnow,

President/CEO of The Recording Academy. "The selections are timeless staples that span six decades and represent a wide range of genres from comedy to rock, reggae, jazz and R&B. They all greatly deserve to be memorialized."

The selected recordings range from 1923's "Dipper Mouth Blues" by King Oliver & His Jazz Band to 1977's "Birdland" by Weather Report. Other recordings also chosen this year include Louis Armstrong's "Lazy River," the Beach Boys' "California Girls," James Brown's "It's a Man's Man's Man's World," George's Carlin's "Class Clown," the Doors' "Riders on the Storm," Jose Feliciano's "Feliz Navidad," and "Catch a Fire" by Bob Marley & The Wailers. Other artists with selections include the Isley Brothers, Bo Diddley, Judy Garland, Gene Kelly, Mahalia Jackson, Harry James & His Orchestra, Janis Joplin, Johnny Mercer, Jelly Roll Morton, and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

The Recording Academy's National Trustees established the GRAMMY Hall Of Fame in 1973 to honor recordings of lasting qualitative or historical significance that are at least 25 years old. Hall Of Fame recordings are reviewed annually by a special member committee of eminent and knowledgeable professionals from all branches of the recording arts, and final approval is made by The Recording Academy Trustees. For more information about the Hall Of Fame or the 52nd Annual GRAMMY Awards visit [www.grammy.com](http://www.grammy.com). For updates and breaking news, please visit The Recording Academy's social networks on Twitter and Facebook: [www.twitter.com/thegrammys](http://www.twitter.com/thegrammys), [www.facebook.com/thegrammys](http://www.facebook.com/thegrammys).

For a complete list of GRAMMY Hall Of Fame inductees, please go to [http://www.grammy.com/Recording\\_Academy/Awards/Hall\\_Of\\_Fame/](http://www.grammy.com/Recording_Academy/Awards/Hall_Of_Fame/).

## Takin' Care of Business...Again

Randy Bachman and Fred Turner have announced they are currently in the studio recording a new album of original material to be released in 2010 through E1 Music Canada. They will embark on a world-wide tour, kicking off at the Sweden Rock Festival, on June 12, 2010.

Over a four year run Bachman and Turner (as leaders of BTO) earned a staggering 120 platinum, gold and silver disks, notching up hits in over 20 countries. The hard rock quartet reached #1 on both the *Billboard* singles and album charts as well as placing a half dozen more songs in the Top 50. "Takin' Care of Business," "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet," "Let It Ride," "Roll On Down the Highway," "Hey You," "Blue Collar," "Not Fragile," "Four Wheel Drive," "Looking Out For #1," "My Wheels Won't Turn"—all classic rock anthems written by Bachman and Turner.

After they split in the mid 1980s, Randy and Fred went their separate ways. Randy worked on a solo career (including establishing himself as a jazz artist), the much-celebrated Guess Who reunion, and the Bachman-Cummings project, as well as becoming radio personality (Randy's *Vinyl Tap* on CBC and Sirius satellite radio is heard by millions worldwide each week). Fred carried on with the other members of Bachman-Turner Overdrive before retiring from music at the end of the '90s.

What brought the two rock icons back together after so many years? "The music," Randy explains. "I was recording my own album with the intention of featuring different vocalists. I asked Fred to sing on this killer track, 'Rock 'n' Roll Is the Only Way Out,'

and it grew from there. It evolved quite naturally and organically into a Bachman & Turner album."

"I'm thrilled to be working on new music with Fred, and feel a sense of excitement and anticipation. I feel like I'm coming full



Randy Bachman

circle with a completeness that I never ever thought I'd feel again. It's incredible!"

Bachman & Turner is not about reliving old glories; Randy and Fred are motivated by a sincere desire to make new music. "If I had a chance to go out and play new things and grow, then I'll be offering people something," offers Fred. "It's all about the music, the creative process, collaboration and teamwork of two old friends and partners." Reunited, Randy Bachman and Fred Turner are offering their legion of fans something new, and taking care of some "unfinished" business as well.

If you thought Bachman & Turner would never appear together again, "You ain't seen nothin' yet." Starting March 1, 2010, check out [www.bachmanandturner.com](http://www.bachmanandturner.com).



## Discovering Music with ChartFusion

Softwiz Labs has announced the release of ChartFusion ([www.chartfusion.net](http://www.chartfusion.net)), a free online multimedia service available on all major platforms, aimed at helping users discover music they enjoy. Users can create their own playlist using various tools like an ever growing list of charts gathered from all over the world, customizable live feeds providing the most popular songs on iTunes from different countries and genres, and custom searches for their favorite artists/songs.

The service provides online backup/restore functionality so that personal data like searches, playlists, charts, etc. can be easily transferred between different computers, permitting access to the music you like at home, at work or on the road.

ChartFusion also provides advanced features like a similar artists and/or similar songs retrieval system which is able to find a set of artists and songs humanly perceived as related to the selected artist/song. By using this tool users can easily discover music they may like based on music they already love.

The ChartFusion service is intended to provide increased user interaction, thus users can broadcast what they are playing so that their friends can tune in and automatically listen to the same songs at the same time. Most popular and most recent broadcasts are featured on the main page as well as a "Now Playing" section. Users can discuss music on the community forums or on each member's personal chat room.

ChartFusion is only intended to be music a dissemination medium and encourages users to buy their favorite songs. The application provides direct links to online stores where users can purchase tracks. **MB**



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# Turning Over Rocks to Find Alternative Markets

THERE'S TREASURE BURIED IN YOUR BACKYARD, SO START DIGGING!

BY MARC WEINSTOCK •

**C**hances are, if you have worked as a disc jockey at a wedding, mitzvah or other type of social event, and you still call yourself simply a DJ, then you are probably only giving yourself credit for half of your talents.

As DJs at social events we are very often making announcements, organizing activities and sometimes even functioning as the on-site coordinator for the complete event—being much more than “just” a DJ. If that describes your experience, you should be calling yourself an “entertainer,” and utilizing that title to broaden the scope of ways you entertain, as well as how you market and promote your services.

In today's economy, to make a living or to support your DJ business, you need to find ways to increase the amount of work you do and hopefully, in turn, your revenue as well. With your emcee skills you should be able to entertain your audiences without even playing a single song and even without the support of a sound system. This will allow you to entertain at venues and for groups that are not looking for a DJ but still want to be entertained.

## YOU'VE GOT THE POWER

For the past few years I have seen an increase in the number of DJs in the industry and have heard the complaints about lower-priced DJs taking business from the more experienced and established DJs. Nothing we do or say will ever stop the iPod revolution from taking business from us, but we do have the power to stay busy in an increasingly over-populated profession—and most of us never use it. The “secret” talent that can take you into new markets and new client bases is your ability to be a true emcee, using primarily your voice and your experience as an

Marc Weinstock is the owner of Party Nation in the Fort Lauderdale, FL area. He has been recognized as “Entertainer of the Year” by the American Disc Jockey Awards and has been a speaker and presenter at various DJ conferences. Marc has also published a workbook featuring 50 of his best game ideas; it is available for sale by contacting Marc at [AGR8MC@gmail.com](mailto:AGR8MC@gmail.com).



organizer.

Many years ago I got involved with a new item to hit our industry. It was first seen by many as not having a place for DJ use. But because of this item—my game show system—I was able to enter a market where people needed entertainment, but already had their favorite DJ for their events. I used this new product to introduce myself to these clients and never once mentioned that I was a DJ. To them, I was a guy who had a new concept to entertain them and they still had their favorite DJ for their dances.

This market was the elementary school system. I found out that many schools were conducting aftercare, and on early release days they needed to provide engaging activities during the extra two hours that the children were in their care. I used the game show to prove to these clients that I can supply their children with great entertainment while being a reliable vendor who showed up on time and performed above their expectations. After the first year, my phone was ringing from these clients as well as others who heard about my game show. They booked their programs for the following year and I increased my number of game shows systems from one to three.

The third year, as my reputation grew, I re-introduced myself as a DJ who can also supply the same great service that I had previously offered with my game shows. The clients jumped on the chance and my bookings more than doubled. Over the past eight years I have increased my menu of services to include sub-contractor services. These satisfy my clients' needs to provide many types of entertainment and also to cover the overflow of work. These vendors include jugglers, ventriloquists and magicians.

The story is far from over. Schools are now just one added area that provides me with mid-week, afternoon sources of income. I've also developed entertainment



# You must be creative and open-minded about how to use the talents that you already have.

concepts for adult-only communities, assisted living facilities, churches, temples, libraries and PTO/PTA organizations.

## GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

By now I have probably caught your attention and you are wondering what I am offering, beyond the game show system, that does not include music or even a sound system, but still gets the same rate of pay that a DJ would. The answer is very simple—and most of you are already doing it at your events. It is GAMES and INTERACTIVIES. This time though, instead of gearing games for kids, I have recreated all the fun events that would be played at the best parties, like those performed on cruise ships and at corporate training events. I call this program my "Cruise Director" show. (Or, for corporate clients, "I.C.E.," which stands for Interactive Corporate Events). The guests compete

in tabletop and dance floor interactive games, gathering points for their table or team. The games can be fast-paced, competitive, relaxed, elementary or any other way needed to suit the audience before you. I have many ideas to choose from so I usually offer a two-hour show with five or six interactive concepts. These events are usually performed mid-week afternoons or sometimes on Friday nights. The best part of these games is that they require very little in props and almost no cost to run, so most, if not all of your income is profit.

Not stopping there I have also recently included "Horse Racing" to my "stable" of offerings for my clients. I promote the idea of fund raisers to clients at no cost to them for the production, as my income comes from receiving 20% of the revenue generated by the client as a service fee to run the event. The sky is the limit on how

much a client can earn and the more they earn the more I earn. This has become a "win-win" idea for me and many of my clients.

So, as you hopefully can see, you must be creative and open-minded about how to use the talents that you already have, to broaden your marketability and increase your income. Take the time to look at your surrounding market: See if schools in your area have aftercare; count how many adult-only and assisted living communities, libraries, churches, temples and other organizations there are within your area that may need entertainment or fund raising. Then look at the talents and materials that you can provide them with and match them up. You have to be the prospector and turn over those rocks to find the gems that lay underneath. I wish you success in your search and much new found fortune. **MB**

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# Narrow Focus = Sharper Focus

TARGETING PROSPECTIVE CLIENTS TO GENERATE BETTER BUSINESS

BY JOHN STIERNBERG •

Here's a common scenario. You promote your company via your website, e-mail blasts, and Twitter. You hand out business cards to interested people at all your gigs, giving each person a few spares to share with family and friends. Occasionally someone will call and say that they have heard of you and would like to see if you are available for a specific date. But is that new prospective client properly qualified? Do they have what it takes to satisfy your creative and business needs (beyond a checkbook and a date to fill)? This article takes a look at how to create prospective client profiles and suggests three action tips for sales and promotional success.

## WHAT IS CLIENT PROFILING?

TV cop shows have brought the concept of profiling to mainstream audiences. Police profilers look for behavioral patterns and use them to predict a criminal's next move. What's the connection to your mobile entertainment business? Your past clients can be analyzed to see what they have in common that works—or doesn't work—for you and your business in terms of fit. Here's our definition of client profiling.

Profiling is the art and science of analyzing the characteristics of a great client and using that information to look for more great clients.

Here are six key attributes of any mobile entertainment client:

1. Type of event (wedding, anniversary party, corporate event, club gig, etc.)
2. Frequency (one time only vs. recurring or residency)
3. Budget (specify your range of acceptable fees)
4. Size of audience (to gauge your sound and lighting system)

5. Geographical location (determine if it is within your trade area and/or will the client pay properly for travel, lodging, etc.)

6. Promotional value (how this will look on your client roster, website, or Facebook fan page—this is the subjective "cool factor" that may influence the type of gigs that you go after)

## GREAT GIGS VS. ANYTHING TO FILL THE CALENDAR

We've all played great gigs and regrettable gigs. The great ones are in our "sweet spot" in terms of audience response, appropriateness of the venue, amenities (catered meals, etc.), and of course fees. The bad ones leave you asking yourself, "Why did I just do that?"

How do you control the mix? Profiling is a key element in the answer to this question.

Go after the clients and engagements that meet your profile, as opposed to settling for whatever comes to you. If you target the clients you want, you are much more likely to work a higher percentage of great gigs.

## HOW TO USE CLIENT PROFILES AS THE BASIS FOR PROMOTION

The process of writing down your preferred client profile is creatively liberating and has upside commercial benefits. Here are three action tips for profiling and targeting your way to better jobs.

**Action Tip 1:** Create multiple profiles. Use the Six Attributes above as a template. Write down brief descriptions of three types of clients: Ideal, Acceptable, and Non-viable. Note the differences. That will give you clarity as well as a basis for Tips 2 and 3.

**Action Tip 2:** Analyze and code your past clients relative to the three profiles. What characteristics do the Ideal clients have in common? Where can you find more like that? How

can you avoid (or at least minimize) dealing with the Nonviable clients? What were the sources of referrals in all cases? Note: If you do this in Excel, you can easily compare and analyze.

**Action Tip 3:** Build your promotion plan around your Ideal and Acceptable profiles. Find out how many viable prospects in each category there are in your market area, and determine how they make decisions about hiring entertainment. Armed with that knowledge, you can plan how to get your brand message to them the most effectively.

## HERE'S THE POINT...

Too many mobile entertainers scramble for work and take any gig that comes along. That often leads to burnout, bit-

**Profiling is the art and science of analyzing the characteristics of a great client and using that information to look for more great clients.**

terness, and financial problems. While it is admittedly easier said than done, the antidote is to go after the clients that you really want—the ones that meet your preferred profiles. Remember that the sequence of the Action Tips is important: 1) create profiles, 2) analyze your past clients, and 3) build a targeted promotion plan.

Next issue we'll delve into how clients make entertainment programming and buying decisions. In the meantime, best wishes for continued success in mobile entertainment! **MB**

John Stiernberg is founder of Stiernberg Consulting, a Sherman Oaks, CA-based business development firm ([www.stiernberg.com](http://www.stiernberg.com)). He has over 25 years experience in entertainment technology. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at [john@stiernberg.com](mailto:john@stiernberg.com). You can find John on LinkedIn, Plaxo, and Facebook and follow him on Twitter.





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# Staying In the Ring

LONGEVITY IN MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT REQUIRES WRESTLING A VARIETY OF ADVERSARIES FOCUSING ON THE PRIZE

BY MIKE FICHER •

**In a little-publicized survey a few years ago, it was found that fifty percent of the men and women who enter the squared circle of professional wrestling leave the sport within the first two years. Two primary reasons were identified.**

First, generally speaking, to develop characters, hone their craft, and, most critically, to make a respectable living, professional wrestlers usually need to participate in multiple regional circuits and independent cards, usually logging 250 to 300 days on the road annually. A significant percentage of new wrestlers move on to other professions because they cannot comfortably manage the rigors of constant travel.

Second, despite the acknowledgement that professional wrestling is choreographed, the physical punishment from bodies crashing to the floor, into tables, stairs, ladders, chairs, fixtures, turnbuckles, ring posts, often unforgiving mats, and, of course, other bodies, takes its toll in fatigue, bruises and nagging injuries. Given the arduous travel schedules of many neophyte wrestlers, recovery and workout time is usually minimal. Thus, the second biggest reason for the high dropout rate in the surreal world of professional wrestling is the inability of aspiring pros to deal with the physical nature of the sport and stay healthy.

## PILEDRIIVER

Now on the surface, parallels might not appear to exist between the soap opera circus of wrestling and the vicissitudes of the mobile entertainment worlds, but consider:

Many entertainers collect bumps, bruises, cuts and pulled muscles from the physical demands of repeatedly transporting and setting up audio, lighting, video, gameshow and other gear at event sites. How many times have you heard entertainers complain about banged up bodies from the often-overlooked physical side of the business? While no statistical evidence is available to support the proposition that the physical demands of the mobile entertainment business may drive out entertainers, with some certainty, the conclusion can be reached that at least a few surrender to the bodily toll.

In less populous or geographically distributed regions and

states, entertainers may travel hundreds of miles to perform gigs. Hours on the road plus the demands of performance can exact a toll on even on the most fit entertainer, particularly as they

age. Again, no statistical evidence is available to say conclusively that travel may prompt a few entertainers to retire, but the assertion that travel is a factor in at least a few retirements is reasonable.

Like professional wrestlers, mobile entertainers ply their trade before different audiences, often in different venues daily or



weekly. Audiences are expecting and demanding more from entertainers, just as wrestlers must continue to up the ante in physical performance and story lines to retain existing supporters and attract new fans. That performance pressure can exact a cost, too.

## REASONS TO CARRY ON

While no surveys exist to track why entertainers leave the business, anecdotal insight is accessible on why many mobiles stay in the business, despite the sometimes disruptive impact of technology, the current economic challenges, the physical demands, and occasionally rigorous travel schedules.

"I get a sense of happiness and satisfaction that I was able to bring joy into an audience's life," offers Scott Faver, one of the most respected and active entertainers in the business, owner/operator of the PartyFavers serving Southern California and Arizona. An entertainer since 1980, Faver cites continual growth and development as a motivator, contending that "The day I think I know it all is the day I'm done in this business. I have learned something new each day. I remain in the creative mode and that



*Mobile DJ, dance instructor, emcee, voice actor, writer, teacher, and improv comedian, Mike Ficher owns and operates Dance Express, based in Bend, Oregon. A three-time presenter and host at Mobile Beat conventions, Mike has been expanding the public's definition of mobile entertainer since 1986.*



inspires me to keep going. Up at 3AM each day, until I get it right."

David Van Enger of Music in Motion, serving the Sacramento, CA market, alludes to the deployment of continual technological evolution as a source of professional satisfaction.

"Music and audio allow an enormous degree of creative development. When I added video screen options about 15 years ago, I increased the number of creative options available to me and my clients," says the frequent Mobile Beat conference presenter. "Just over the last few years, with some of the digital and technical advancements, I have found that the fun and different options I can now create for my clients are only limited by my imagination and the imaginations of my clients."

Keith Alan, owner/operator of Keith Alan Productions in Prospect, CT, serving the Northeast, echoes the positive vibes many entertainers receive from being a part of the mobile industry.

"What better way to make a living is there?" asks the veteran entertainer. "Every time I go to work, everyone around me is in a good mood and is relaxed."

Van Enger cites "the joy of taking them [the audience] to

**"I get a sense of happiness and satisfaction that I was able to bring joy into an audience's life." —Scott Faver**

another level" as a constant goal. "Some in our industry are okay with just playing a request list or basic set of music. That's not for me. I truly enjoy and sometimes even strive to hear guests and clients say 'I've never seen that before.'"

Alan, like many entertainers, gains more than just a living from the nights of setting up equipment, coming home late, the sometimes lonely and lengthy travel, the days of prepping for events, tweaking equipment and making sales calls.

"Knowing that I have played a small part in someone else's life means the world to me," says the veteran entertainer. "Hosting a great wedding reception where the couple can always look back and say they had a great time; entertaining a corporate event when the employees thank me rather than complain that the boss spent the money on a party rather than a raise for them; hosting a game show for special needs kids and getting a huge hug at the end of the game... Those are some of the things that make me so grateful I have the ability to do what I do."

Like professional wrestlers, mobile entertainers may suffer some burnout, physical exhaustion and travel fatigue. But, for many, such as Alan, the reasons for staying in the trade are fairly apparent.

"When my son (now a 31-year-old US Army Sgt First Class) was 15 years old, we were stopped at a traffic light. He looked at me and said, 'Dad, can I ask you a personal question?' Being an open-minded father, I said, 'Sure Jeff, ask away.' He asked, 'Do you like what you do?' My response was simply, 'Yes, I do.' He hung his head, gave a sigh and said, 'Then it's true...you don't work for a living.' After a few minutes of explanation, he understood that when you enjoy what you do to earn money, it really isn't work anymore." **MB**

# Knowledge Is Power: The Wedding Report

THE WEDDING REPORT IS A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR IMPROVING YOUR WEDDING-RELATED BUSINESS

BY RYAN BURGER •

**A**s a disc jockey company owner, I am very interested in what is happening with the largest category of events that my company does: weddings, both ceremonies and receptions. Many, if not most mobile entertainment companies depend on this market segment to bring in a majority of their company's income. In our case, we estimate it at being around 50% (in the Des Moines, Iowa market). Many other companies in our area are up in the 85-90% area with the wedding specialty. Thus, when I found out that there is a detailed annual report on the wedding market produced by The Wedding Report, Inc ([www.theweddingreport.com](http://www.theweddingreport.com)), I was very interested. The following is a sampling of the extremely useful information to be found in The Wedding Report.

## THE BIG WEDDING PICTURE

The total estimated market value of DJs hired for wedding receptions was at \$895 million, down from 2008 at \$926 million. \$19,000 is spent on the average wedding, with an average guest count of 140, and mostly due to the recession these numbers are both down from last year. This echoed through to many of the services involved in the wedding reception, with couples more often relying on friends to provide elements of their receptions. In other words, other services that were previously handled by professional wedding vendors were affected just like DJs have been, with more so-called iPod weddings or "my friend is DJing for us."

The average price a couple spent for their DJ was \$643, down from \$682 the previous year. But, one consequence of recession-induced belt-tightening is a growth area that DJs can actually take advantage of: For 1/2 of weddings that brides are planning, the ceremony will be at the same location as the re-



ception. Thus, there are more possibilities for adding on portable sound systems for a nice extra rental fee or to book more gigs with a package discount.

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Knowing many disc jockeys in California and Chicago, I thought it would be informative to compare rates across the three markets, including our home base of Des Moines. The average couple in our area spends \$593 on their DJ service, which is actually higher than what I would have estimated, based on what I know of the market personally. (Our company's average wedding reception is \$775.) The average in Los Angeles was \$880 and in Chicago it was \$884. Comparing similar stats for our close cousins in wedding photography and videography, their rates dropped off significantly when comparing the big cities with Des Moines, by similar percentages. Again, both of those stats appear to be very low when compared with the companies that we work for. Concerning videographers, I believe that's an area where a lot of brides are having a friend do the event, thus deflating the number. Almost everyone hires a DJ and a photographer, but not everyone hires a videographer.

## WEB DEVELOPMENT

Of special interest to DJs who are developing their web presences is that approximately 7 to 8% of DJs were booked completely online through e-commerce. The number of brides using the internet to plan their weddings held steady with previous years at 80%. Of the brides that are planning online, the top three reasons for using the Internet were: cost estimates—90%; to create and manage checklists—89%; and 88% to get quotes and ideas.

**One consequence of recession-induced belt-tightening is a growth area that DJs can actually take advantage of: For 1/2 of weddings that brides are planning, the ceremony will be at the same location as the reception.**

When it comes to DJ websites, it's definitely important to have a "sticky" website—one that is useful and interactive, rather than just an online brochure. Planning and administrative tools like DJ Intelligence, DJ Event Planner and others will become more and more important as, for example, 73% of brides use timelines, 74% utilize song lists, along with many other functions that you can offer through your website with the right tools. Brides are also starting to do blogs for their

wedding and 50+% use Facebook to share details about their wedding, so that looks to be an increasingly powerful place to consider advertising.

## THE FUTURE

Overall, into 2010 and beyond, The Wedding Report is estimating a growth of 2% each year in the amount of money being spent on wedding receptions, including on the disc jockey service. I think the key take-away here is that DJs will be marketing against "cost savers" like the iPod wedding, all-inclusive packages from some venues, and more for the foreseeable future. It is up to us to be creative and proactive in our marketing and not stay in old ruts where we are sure to be left behind. The challenge is to find ways to show clients the true value of our services—and not give in to the ever-present pressure to offer deeper and deeper discounts.

Thanks to Shane McMurray of the The Wedding Report for the data referred to in this article. A membership at TheWeddingReport.com will get you the complete reports, featuring beefier details, more specific and localized info, and much more helpful info. **MB**

## About The Wedding Report (www.theweddingreport.com)

The Wedding Report, Inc. is a research company that tracks and forecasts numbers of weddings, spending, and consumer trends for the wedding industry. Its vision is to be the leading provider of wedding market research worldwide.

Its goals include:

- Producing key research that provides a better understanding of the wedding industry for local and global markets.
- Providing information and tools that help businesses acquire a better understanding of their

marketplace so they can obtain more customers and make better business decisions.

- Offering wedding consumers information and tools that help them with their planning activities while partnering with them to gain more insight into the wedding market.

CEO and founder Shane McMurray originally started The Wedding Report in 2004 as a blog to post articles about the wedding industry for wedding businesses. Today, The Wedding Report, Inc. provides wedding market intelligence to thousands of businesses and researchers all over the world.

McMurray's research has been men-

tioned in the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Forbes*, *SmartMoney*, and hundreds of other publications, magazines, books, and news articles. He has provided direct wedding industry insight to eHarmony, Martha Stewart, Conde Nast, Blue Nile, Swarovski, WEtv, Perfect Wedding Guide, along with many other companies. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology / Web Management and an MBA with a focus on e-business. In addition to eight years of wedding industry experience, he has 17 years of experience in sales, marketing and business management, as well as 14 years experience in the design and development of business intelligence software.



# Out of Africa?

TURNING THE TABLES ON A CRAIGSLIST SCAMMER

BY JAKE FELDMAN •

**“Hello...my name is Mrs. Courtney. I need a good DJ to play just 8 hours for my upcoming wedding..” While it may sound innocent enough, this is actually the opening of a scam being run against DJs across the country and presumably the world. And though we will probably never know for sure if the perpetrator is indeed in Africa, it’s fun to imagine a Somalia-based pirate taking to the high seas of the internet to pillage and plunder from DJs (of course to the tune of Toto’s “Africa”).**

All kidding aside, this is an honest-to-goodness, true story about a bait-and-switch routine that has actually worked against well-meaning DJs. “Courtney,” our fictitious lead was trying to extort money from Mobile Beat’s in-house production company with a racket that has worked well in other markets. What gave away the ruse, however, was our insistence on professionalism (a contract) and the simple fact that we keep in close contact with other wedding vendors and facilities in our area.

Subject: Re: DJ NEEDED PLEASE REPLY ASAP

—Hello... my name is Mrs Courtney. I need a good DJ to play for just 8 hours in my wedding which will be coming up on the 28th of this month, NOVEMBER. This even will occur in a hall that will contain approximately 150 guests.

Kindly let me know the cost to play for 8 hours and i will be responsible for the transportation fee to move your instrument. I will also be happy to pay for the MC. Let me know the cost all together and i will let you have the address to the place. Please reply with your mailing address so i can know how far is your place to the event place.....You will be playing different kind of songs such as RnB, Ragae, Hip Hop and Jazz.

Please get back to me so i can give you further details and after the event, I promise to advertise you for more up coming events.

Let me know the cost to play for 8 hours and MC fee.

Best Regards  
COURTNEY

and most wedding are planned months—if not a full year—in advance, I immediately became a little suspicious. Besides that minor detail, there were numerous grammatical and spelling errors in the initial e-mail, which gave me the impression that this event was for a client for whom English was a non-primary language. But, as we often do international-flavored events, I decided to give the lead a response to see where it went.

Hello..

I am happy to read from you... I will like you to let me know the price for 8hours place different kind of music... I am using this opportunity to inform you that You have been chosen to play on the wedding ceremony. I found your info on [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com)

This is the Wedding location below:

Lake Robbins Ballroom  
Address 26726 150th Street  
Woodward, IA 50276

My best friend wedding ceremony will also be coming up in the following week after mine. I will have him book you to play on that days also. I will advertise you for other upcoming event. This is the picture of me and my wife below. We really want it to be a nice party and i know with the sound of your music, Everywhere will be lively and rocky. I am currently out of state to check my grandma who is seriously sick and i want her to be fine before the wedding. I will like to send you the payment in form of US CASHIERS CHECK. Kindly reply me with the details below so that i can contact my secretary to issue out the payment immediately and send to you by UPS COURIER SERVICE.

Kindly get back with details such as:

FULL NAME:  
ADDRESS:  
CITY:  
STATE:  
ZIP CODE:  
CELL PHONE:  
BEST WAY TO REACH YOU (PHONE OR EMAIL):  
COST FOR 8 HOURS PLAY AND ALSO INCLUDE THE TRANSPORTATION FEE TO AND FRO:

I will wait to read from you.  
God bless  
COURTNEY

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## THE LEAD

“Courtney Baxter” e-mailed us through our online system regarding an upcoming event scheduled to be held during the day on November 28. As the date of the first e-mail was November 15th



Courtney,

For that location, there is no transportation fee—and based on the information that you have given to me—a package for eight hours with both ceremony and reception, our price would be \$1025.

Please let me know your address and phone number(s) so I may draw up a contract. As for the payment, once you receive the contract via email, you may either call in and pay the retainer or balance via credit card or personal check. Unfortunately at this time we are not accepting cashiers checks.

Please let me know!

Thanks,

Jake

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Subject: Re: REPLY ASAP...Re: DJ NEEDED PLEASE REPLY ASAP/ IOWA

Courtney,

Is there a time next week that you would be able to meet regarding this event? We could also have your planning meeting at that time.

Please let me know!

Thanks,

Jake

## THE RESPONSE

I responded as I normally do, by congratulating the couple on their engagement and clearing up any questions they had about MCs and travel fees (inside an hour there are none) and finally by showing value for our services. I still needed to have a firm location and a time frame to quote a price, so I replied, even as I grew more suspicious.

"Courtney" fired off a quick response, and after telling me the location of the event, expressed confidence in our company's ability by expressing that "everywhere will be lively and rocky." Finally, the tip-off came at the end of the third e-mail (in about 3 hours) when "Courtney" needed to know our company's address to send a cashier's check via UPS—still without being quoted a price.

As I had mentioned before, we have a pretty great relationship with most vendors and venues in the area. They refer us and we refer them, because we know that they will do a great job. The venue mentioned, the Lake Robbins Ballroom, is a prime example of a small-town ballroom that we have worked many times over the years, and that we can refer for a nice "country wedding." I say "country" because the ballroom is about six miles from the nearest town, on a gravel road, and ironically there is no lake—only a cornfield. So I called the ballroom's management/barkeep to double-check the bookings for that Saturday (like I had suspected: a country AND western band) and received the necessary confirma-

tion to determine my course of action: I was going to play along with the scam to receive this bogus check! This scam has been discussed numerous times at Start.Mobilebeat.com over the last couple of years, but hardly anyone has followed through and not gotten cheated. Since we knew what was going to happen, we played along and stopped just short of "Courtney's" target.

## THE SECOND ACT

Here's a bit of back story: My company briefly advertised on Craigslist.org in an effort to embrace a new (and free) form of advertising. While it didn't work for us, other companies around the country have actually picked up legitimate events from the site. It is here, though, that "Courtney" got our contact information.

Jim Ross, legendary pro-wrestling play-by-play commentator, said it best when he yelled "Business is about to pick up!" Meanwhile, back at the office, I had decided to play along with the fake lead and later share my experiences with you, the readers of this publication. My next step was to quote a price and provide an address, just like I was asked. "Courtney," in return, provided me with a tracking number so I could see the check move across the USA into my waiting hands. Well, it actually a pickup, as I provided our PO box instead of a physical address because I didn't want her visiting me or my warehouse if she was in the country, so I had to trek over to the UPS hub to receive payment for the event.

Thank you so much for your response. I really appreciate your honesty. I have contact my husband about the wrong amount on the check sent and he said he was the one that made the mistake and he said he wanted to issue a separate amount to the caterer who will prepare the food for the even but he mistakenly issued the whole payment on one place by mistake so please we need you to do us this great favor and we will appreciate this alots if you can quickly get this done today because its needed by the Caterer so they can get all stuff ready to cook the food and get prepared for the even . Please deduct Your amount for the event \$1025.00 and deduct another extra \$50 for the stress of helping us and go ahead and help us to wire the rest of the funds at western union union store or you can get it done online at [www.westernunion.com/us](http://www.westernunion.com/us) . This means you will deduct \$1075 .

Please help us to wire the rest of the funds to the caterer information below:

NAME: DELLA ARGENT  
ADDRESS: 5211 BEACH RD  
CITY: ROSCOE  
STATE: NY  
ZIP CODE: 12776

Please kindly get back to me with the western union information as shown on the western union receipt such as:

1. SENDERS FULL NAME
2. ADDRESS
3. MTCN (10 DIGITS CONTROL NUMBER)
- 4: AMOUNT SENT

This is the kind of music genre we will like you to prepare to play different music from the different Genres below



R&B and Soul  
 Rap and Hip-Hop  
 Reggae  
 Religious and Devotional  
 Rock and Pop  
 Classical  
 Country  
 Blues  
 Jazz  
 Latin

The even will be starting by 9AM and ends by 6PM but you will only play for 8 hours. Kindly help us to wire the rest of the funds today so the caterer have it and get prepared for their work too.

Best Regards  
 Courtney

Subject: Re: PLEASE GET THIS DONE TODAY / AWAITING WESTERN UNION DETAILS...Re: DJ NEEDED PLEASE REPLY ASAP/ IOWA

Courtney,  
 We have a slight problem. The venue has no idea who you are and has no events of a private nature scheduled that day. In Iowa, the wedding and event business are pretty close knit communities, so we do talk quite often.

Additionally, the check that you sent is not a valid check—therefore it is in a frame hung above my desk and not cashed.

This story is also going to be published in a national trade magazine, as I understand you have pulled this scam with DJs before—and I want to keep this from happening again. Am I correct in assuming that you are indeed on the continent of Africa at this time? Is there any quote that you would like me to add to my story?

On another note— typing in all caps is considered “shouting” and should be avoided. I would

## THE BAIT AND SWITCH

In the couple of days before picking the check up, I researched Craigslist scams on the net and discovered that a few DJs had fallen for the extortion tactic posed by the con-artist known as

**The moral of the story in this potential cash-grab is the idea that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is.**

“Courtney” and others. Just as in those cases, when I opened the envelope I was surprised to see that she had “mistakenly” written the check for \$3850.00, which was well above the \$1025.00 which was quoted for a daytime event in the off-season.

Most of those who got ripped-off were “hosed” because they were ethical people—and that’s what scammers want. Because the check (which is a VERY good fake) looks real and is for well over the amount, the well-meaning vendors contact the client and offer to return the difference between their services’ balance and the check’s value. What they are asked, though, is to “pay off the other vendor” such as the caterer, which in my case was at an address in Roscoe, NY. Now of course they asked me to wire the funds via Western Union “so they could get started preparing the food,” but they actually asked for the money quickly because it might take the bank a day to realize the check is indeed a fake. (Most checks are not immediately available as useable funds until at least a business day after their deposit to protect the bank from these problems.) To top off the deception, I was even asked to provide a tracking number to make sure the funds were on their way.

Instead of wiring the balance, I picked up the phone and alerted local authorities of the scam that would have taken place. Knowing that most likely “Courtney” will never be caught, I still contacted them, hoping to provide just a little evidence for their case and to hopefully protect other area DJs and wedding vendors against similar scams.

Before hanging the check above my desk as a reminder of the shysters always lurking in the murky underworld of online business, I decided to reply one last time:

never take someone shouting in my face in real life, let alone a jobless scam artist.

And so I will keep your rubber check as a reminder that there is still bad in the world and those with time and energy can also devote it to deceiving others.

There is still time, however, for you to turn your life around and make a decent living. I hope sincerely that you give it a shot by stopping your craigslist racket and turning yourself over to a higher power and a greater good.

By the way: you might have to turn your life around in Jail. I have notified the proper authorities and they are aware of your scam.

Sincerely,  
 Jake Feldman BC Productions — W.D.F.A.

## THE AFTERMATH

“Courtney” most likely will strike again, successfully. It all goes to show that without a contract, you’re setting yourself up for major liability. Even with a contract, though, the scam may have still worked, as the perpetrator is outside the jurisdiction of US laws, in the safe havens of the internet and foreign shores. What saved us from this near-miss, though, was our close relationship with others in our local wedding industry and by our insistence on having some sort of real-time consultation (preferably in person). The moral of the story in this potential cash-grab is the idea that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is. Whatever you do, practice safe selling! **MB**



# Moving On and Getting It Done



PROCRASTINATION, PART 2

BY PAUL KIDA, THE DJ COACH •

**In our last article we discussed the problem of procrastination and some of the underlying reasons we may have this trait. Hopefully, you have determined your own personal reasons for putting off doing certain tasks that need to be done. If you haven't already figured out how to correct these tendencies, we will talk about some solutions now.**

## TAKING POSITIVE STEPS

As we talked about in the previous article, there are several different fears that may cause us to procrastinate. We spoke of fear of failure, fear of success, fear of losing our independence, and a possible fear of abandonment. How can we conquer these fears so that we can move on and get things done in a timely manner?

The one thing that all of these fears have in common is negativity. Those of us who have a fear of failure may think that this is a positive attitude, but it is not. By simply just doing enough to get by we put ourselves in a negative mode of thinking and working because, although we're not really failing, we can't really call that succeeding either. If we're stuck in this habitual way of acting, we often play it safe, not doing our best, and not pushing ourselves to our true potential.

How can we correct this? By making small mental adjustments and by changing our negativity to a more positive outlook. It is time to change our attitude to "working to win" and to be better than the status quo. Think in terms of small actions, and rather than delaying and underperforming as way to put off a challenge, instead try to focus on the long-term positive results that will come if you act NOW on each successive step. Instead of keeping the fear of failure in the back of

our minds, replace that thought with the rewards of success!

The same is true with the other fears we may have. If we fear success and the hard work and responsibilities that come along with it, change that outlook with clear, positive reasons to succeed. Focus on the benefits that will come, such as the inner satisfaction you will feel, the financial security and rewards you will reap, as well as the praise you will receive from those who truly appreciate your accomplishments.

Always remember that YOU are the one in control of what you can do with your talents, training and abilities. By getting things done in a timely manner, you will prove to yourself and those close to you that you are able to guide your path in life. Plus, you will find yourself surrounded by people who treasure and respect you. Guess what? That truth just made you conquer your fears of losing control and abandonment. You can become victorious over any fear by thinking, and more importantly, by ACTING in a positive way. This, in turn, will help you end the cycle of procrastination.

## FORWARD MOMENTUM

Oh I know, we have all heard people say that if you just think positively, all good things will come to you. The truth is that this is not some magical secret that just happens to a few. It does take hard work and the ability to not give up on your dreams even if you face a few setbacks along the way. The realization is that ALL of us face setbacks. If you do research on some of the most famous, successful people on the planet, you will see that there were many times when they almost gave up...then the next step they took brought them to the success that they were working for! The key is NOT giving up. Maybe you need to step back and re-evaluate, but then keep moving forward toward that goal. Let's do a review of some time management and goal setting techniques that keep you moving forward.

Most of us have a pretty good idea of what we need to accomplish in a day with marketing, contacting clients, preparing for upcoming gigs, book keeping, etc. The problem comes in not knowing where to start or how to prioritize tasks. This is where the old saying comes in: "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." Every successful entrepreneur has a plan, both for business and for day-to-day life. This is not merely a mental picture of what needs to be done. It is a specific, written, structured plan for each day, week, month, year, etc. This is a time management plan that enables one to keep close track of what is getting done and if it's getting done on time.

## MAKE A LIST, CHECK IT MORE THAN TWICE

One of the simple things to start off with is to just make a list. You might think that you just know what needs to be done mentally and you don't need to write it down, but this way of thinking is part of what keeps you locked in your least productive mode of action. Look at it this way: Your list is nothing more than putting your thoughts down in writing so that you have a visual reference as the day goes on. By creating a schedule, it will actually make things easier for you in the long run.

To start off, make a list of the things that need to be done. I do mean everything, both business and personal. Next, divide that list into two sections, one for business and one for personal. Now you need to refine your two lists by day, week, month, and year. For instance, on your business list you have bookkeeping,

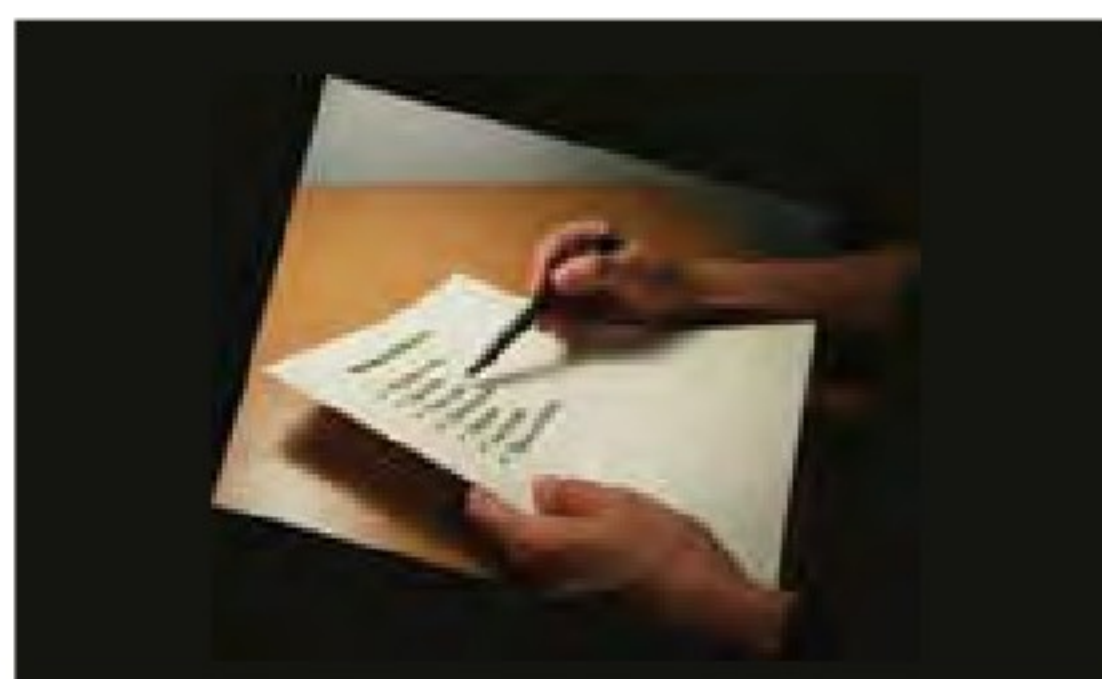
*Paul Kida, The DJ Coach, is a founding member of the Colorado Disc Jockey Association. He owns JAMMCATTS DJ Entertainment ([www.jammcatsdj.com](http://www.jammcatsdj.com)), and is a regular speaker at the Mobile Beat DJ Show.*





gigs, phone calls, e-mails, networking, job preparation and equipment maintenance or upgrades. Perhaps the daily list contains potential client phone calls, e-mails, and bookkeeping. Weekly, it may be vendor calls, job preparation and gigs. Monthly may be networking meetings and equipment upkeep, making sure you have the newest songs for upcoming gigs, etc. The same principle applies to your personal list. Now you have a visual image of what needs to be done in your busy life. You can now set aside blocks of time for each item, so that you will have an efficient schedule.

As you look at your schedule for the day, you now need to prioritize what is the most important to work on first. Do you need more gigs booked soon? Then maybe phone calls then e-mails should be your first priority for that day, and maybe throughout the week. It is also important to review your list often because things change continually. For example, as bridal season approaches, preparation for your many gigs will take priority over phone calls and e-mails looking for new clients. Of course, the more calls the better, but job preparation is imperative if you expect



referrals. Client satisfaction should be top priority, always.

Having a good schedule will keep you focused on the tasks at hand. It can also give you deep personal satisfaction as you see items successfully completed. It may seem like a small thing, but once you get into this habit of writing down your schedule, you will find that it is an invaluable tool throughout your life.

One quick note about your written schedule is this: It is a guide, not an inflexible rule of action. It should not run every minute of your life, but it should be used only as a basic structure for day-to-day activities. Another point is that from time to time, unexpected things will interfere with your schedule and you may not get done what you had planned. Do not look at this

as a failure! Unforeseen circumstances happen to us all, but if we go right back to the plan the next day, it will be only a temporary setback.

Another benefit of sticking to a schedule is that it helps us to avoid time wasters. Television, the Internet, social websites, video games and many other distractions can take up huge amounts of time—amounts that we might be unaware of without a schedule and to-do list to keep us accountable to what's really important. Of course, we need to schedule personal recreation and family time, and that's where the personal list comes into play.

Implement these changes and come up with your life schedule now. At first, it may seem strange or difficult, but that always comes with change no matter what it is in our lives. Stick with it! Within three to four weeks, it becomes a part of you, your personal routine. It will make your life easier as you are finally getting everything done and doing it right!

*Please send any comments on this article, suggestions for future articles or questions to [djcoach@mobilebeat.com](mailto:djcoach@mobilebeat.com). MB*

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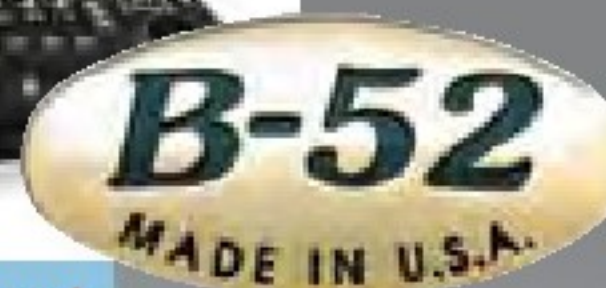
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# 2010: Onward and Upward

SURPRISINGLY, "GIVING BACK" JUST MIGHT BE THE TICKET TO A PROSPEROUS FUTURE

BY MIKE "DR. FRANKENSTAND" RYAN •

**I**t's finally 2010. Hopefully we can put one crummy decade to rest and look forward to some more optimistic years ahead. Consider: Since the turn of the new millennium we have witnessed the horrific 9-11 tragedy, two major Stock Market crashes and the near collapse of our once world dominant automobile industry. Mobile DJs have their share of downers too: iPod weddings, a scourge of bottom feeders, illegal music headaches in the karaoke business, recession-related income struggles, and more.

I think about friends whose businesses are still suffering from the recession. Just this week it hit me close to home. Our neighborhood music store, a place where my friends and I used to buy vinyl records and guitars and other stuff, just went out of business and the owner reportedly took his own life. Failed businesses are painful memories of dashed hopes and dreams. According to a recent CNN poll, 40% of Americans feel the serious economic condition is still their number one concern today.

## POSITIVE PROGNOSIS?

As one "doctor" to another, I spoke with Dr. Drax, president of the American Disc Jockey Association who always seems to have his glass half full. Drax offers this reality check: "A bad economy affects the ill prepared! During the last recession some businesses flourished while others failed. It's about being prepared for a soft economy, which the DJ industry is not immune too." On the other hand, he continues, "During the same down period the DJ industry witnessed great technological advances such as lighter speakers, the digital realms, the video revolution and even powered speaker stands like the Frankenstand (shameless plug), all of which have made DJing easier and better."

I agree that DJing is much easier,

but let's face it: The hospitality industry has been hit hard. And in light of recent government bailouts, large-scale corporate events are now politically incorrect. Right now it's about survival. Like Daddy Warbucks' secretary Grace Farrell said in *Annie* (a musical set during the depths of the Great Depression): "It's a bad time to be out of work."

## GENEROSITY LEADS TO PROSPERITY

One survival tool I've started using is the dreaded freebie. I've never believed that freebies equaled good exposure. Admittedly, I have sarcastically remarked that the only thing I ever got from exposure was cold. Today my attitude has softened a bit. Doing occasional freebies has become part of my business plan, and it has helped to turn around my bottom line.

Last week I donated my time and music for the thirteenth anniversary Hot Rod Cruise Night at a close friend's restaurant. I knew they could use the help because out of the eight restaurants in their food court, they were one of only three remaining. It was a great turnout and we all had fun. I displayed my business cards and a number of customers picked them up. I call that public relations for potential work later on, plus, to my surprise, the restaurant owner

fed me and paid me a few bucks to boot. What the heck, I had a good time, hung out with hot rodders (my kinda people), spun a few tunes and had a veggie burger and a Coke.

I did another freebie on the morning of Thanksgiving's day, announcing an event that raised money and food for a local food bank. I made a deal with the event coordinator that I would announce the event if she let put up my business banner. I didn't make any money but my name was displayed in front of thousands of participants.

I'm doing another one next Saturday morning, again at no charge. I did however, ask the event director if they had a budget to pay for my services, she said not this time, but in a few months they would, and she would consider hiring me then.

## GOOD VIBRATIONS

What else can DJs do to make the future a good one and ensure the health of our industry? For one, we can unite as a profession. I suggest joining a DJ association. Don't be afraid to donate your time and talents; it will build a positive vibe in your life, as well as expose your services to potentially paying future clients. Get more involved with your community. Write an article for the local paper. Do whatever you can to plant seeds that will bear fruit for you in better times.

As for me, I'm taking over the presidency of our local ADJA chapter, donating my DJ services wherever I can, and planning for better sales of my speaker stands. My New Year's resolution: Plan for the future, give back to my community, get more involved in the DJ industry and be a real DJ Hero!

Here's to a prosperous and Happy New Year! **MB**

Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a SoCal DJ on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands. He is currently the president of the San Diego Chapter of the ADJA.



## MUSIC CARES

Donating time, money and food is a popular and compassionate thing to do these days, even in the music industry. The Five-Star Drum Shops' Big Beat drumming event, held November 1 by the national non-profit organization of percussion stores, generated more than 4,600 pounds of food, raised \$62,500 for charities. Guitar Center has announced that it collected 52,981 cans of food donated by musicians as part of a four-week nationwide food drive. All cans were donated to local food banks across the country where Guitar Center has stores.



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